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



**GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN**

**SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Twelfth Session**

**Budva, Montenegro, 25-29 January 2010**

**MAJOR ACTIVITIES OF THE FAO REGIONAL PROJECTS**

1. This document summarizes the most significant activities carried out by the FAO Regional Projects, namely, AdriaMed, MedSudMed CopeMed II, EastMed, ArtFiMed, MedFisis and the GEF-supported Partnership for the Mediterranean (MED-LME), during the intersessional period of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). Project activities include research and training programmes, workshops and working groups, as well as the technical assistance provided to some countries, the SAC and its Sub-Committees and Working groups.

**AdriaMed - “Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea”**

2. The project is financed by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF). It has been cofinanced by the European Community between April 2007 and March 2008, and for an additional period of 12 months (2010).

3. The Project aims at promoting scientific cooperation among the Adriatic countries and to improve the management of fishing activities in compliance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries. The main goals of the Project are to develop common basic knowledge and support regional fishery management through improved scientific coordination among the fishery institutions. The activities carried out during the intersessional period, followed the workplan for 2009 as approved by the 10th AdriaMed Coordination Committee (Italy, January 2009), which included the continuation of research programmes, workshops, training programmes as well as the technical assistance given to the countries and the cooperation of the Project with relevant institutions, primarily the GFCM, through the SAC and its Sub-Committees.

4. The tenth meeting of the Coordination Committee of the AdriaMed Project was held from 26th to 27th January 2009, in Chioggia, Italy, hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies of the Republic of Italy. During the meeting the work plan for 2009 was discussed and agreed.

5. Following the communication of the Italian Donor, the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF), of its readiness to support a second phase of the AdriaMed Project, the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Division was requested by the Donor to perform a technical review of the Project to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the project's activities and to recommend any complementary measures that might be required for the improvement of the efficiency of the Project during a proposed third phase.

6. Between March and May 2009 the Project staff and the consultant entrusted by FAO to carry out the technical review visited all the countries participating in the Project (Fisheries Directorates and Research Institutions of Albania, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro and Slovenia). Each institution was interviewed and provided a comprehensive overview of the achievements and constraints of the project activities in the respective country, from their perspective, and identified thematic areas and activities to be included in a Project Document for future implementation during a possible future phase of the Project.

7. In this respect the Project staff, in coordination with FIMF, is drafting a new Project proposal for a third phase of AdriaMed to be proposed to the Italian Donor, by taking into consideration the comments and suggestions collected during the technical review mission and the challenges for fisheries management in the area.

8. Moreover the project performed the following main activities:

### **Demersal and Small Pelagic Fishery Resources**

- Working Group on Demersal Fishery Resources (Croatia, June 2009): A two day training-working session was organized to jointly apply the Survey Based Assessment (SURBA) method to the data made available by the Adriatic experts. This was followed by a third day to discuss the ongoing and future Project activities. Preliminary assessments of *Nephrops norvegicus* and *Merluccius merluccius* for the Adriatic Sea were jointly performed, exploring the possibility of dealing either separately with the two GSAs, or joining all the data for the Adriatic.
- Working Group on Small Pelagic Fishery Resources (Italy, October 2009): The meeting reviewed the knowledge and information on small pelagic fish stocks, mainly anchovy and sardine. The stock assessments of anchovy and sardine were performed for the first time in GSA 17 combining all the data made available by the experts of the participating countries. The AdriaMed Small Pelagic WG reviewed also the results of the echosurveys in Western and Eastern GSA 18 and the application of DEPM in GSA 18; both activities carried out under the umbrella of the project. The future Project activities were identified including those concerning the Coordinating Team on Echo Surveys in the Adriatic Sea; The results of the stock assessment of anchovy and sardine for GSA 17 were presented and discussed during the SAC/SCSA (Malaga, November/December 2009).
- The Project continued to support the research programme "Stock Assessment of *Solea solea* in the northern and central Adriatic Sea and evaluation of the impact of the different fishing activities (SOLEMON)". On December 2009 the associated survey, covering Italian, Croatian and Slovenian waters was performed. Stock assessment of *Solea solea* in GSA 17 resulting from these activities was performed and discussed at the SAC/SCSA Working group on stock assessment of demersal species (Ancona, October 2009);

- The Project continued to support the scientific experiments carried out in the Pomo/Jabuka pits area on *Nephrops* stocks as an example of methodology to assess demersal fisheries resources giving additional data to compare with the trawl survey data. The Istituto di Scienze Marine (CNR – ISMAR) of Ancona (Italy) in cooperation with the Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries of Split (Croatia), under the auspices of AdriaMed, carried out an evaluation of the *Nephrops* stocks in the Jabuka/Pomo pits area using the towed UnderWater TV (UWTV) methodology in May 2009. The corresponding results were presented during the SAC-SCSA (Malaga, November/December 2009);

### **Social and Economic Fishery Sciences**

- The Project supported the continuation of the study designed with the objective of implementing a monitoring system for the Montenegrin fisheries sector, including biological, environmental, economic and social information, applying the Operating Unit (OU) concept. The study is carried out in cooperation with the Institute of Marine Biology of Kotor and the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Management (Fisheries Directorate). The collection of biological data has begun at the end of August and will continue until May 2010.
- Following a request made during the 8th Coordination Committee meeting, the project organized a Workshop on Socio-economic data collection systems in the Adriatic Sea, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food of Slovenia. This workshop will be held in Ljubljana, from 21 to 22 January 2010. The priorities of each country concerning the collection of fisheries socio-economic data and the promotion of the use of socio-economic indicators will be identified and discussed.

### **Aquaculture**

- The Project supported the participation of several Adriatic experts in a number of GFCM - CAQ related meetings. The Project continued its support to the Institute of Marine Biology of Kotor for the creation of a Centre for the Conservation of Marine Biodiversity in Montenegro. In this respect a technical mission was organized at the IBMK to verify the most relevant aspects and considerations to be taken into account for the preparation of a plan for the restoration of the aquaculture facilities at the IBMK.

### **Adriatic Fishery Statistics and Information Systems**

- The Project pursued the activities carried out so far for the inclusion of Adriatic Scientific publications into the ASFA database, as well as supporting the collaboration centres created at the Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (IOF) in Split, Croatia, and at the Institute of Marine Biology of Kotor (Montenegro). AdriaMed is also continuing to support the FAO ASFA Secretariat.
- The updated version of ATrIS (version 2.1) the computerized system developed to manage and undertake preliminary analysis of the data sets from the AdriaMed trawl survey, has been distributed to the MEDITS participants following a request expressed by the MEDITS coordination group (April, 2009). ATrIS is now the common tools being used by more than 20 Mediterranean research institutes to manage trawl survey data (including in many cases MEDITS data). The Project continues to provide technical assistance to the research institutes and continues to work on the development and improvement of this application.

- The AdriaMed Information System, which is available on the AdriaMed portal ([www.faoadriamed.org](http://www.faoadriamed.org)), has been updated and further improved. Currently, the Project Web site hosts 13 databases: (e.g. Fishing Ports, Fish Markets Species, Fisheries Legislation). The section including the information related to the fisheries and aquaculture sector of each participating country has been updated (Country Fishery Information Sheets). Moreover an effort to harmonize the web sites of all the regional projects of the Mediterranean has been made, both in the presentation of the information through the same format of the web pages, and in the fisheries information sheet.

### **Strengthening of regional cooperation**

- In order to strengthen international and regional cooperation the Project interacts closely with the FAO Regional Project MedSudMed. In addition, several meetings of coordination were held with the other regional projects CopeMed II, ArtFiMed and EastMed in order to consolidate and coordinate common activities. In this respect an effort to harmonize the information included in the respective projects web site, commencing from the information of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in each participating country was done. In this respect the Project also participated in the Coordination Committees of MedSudMed (February 2009) and CopeMed II (June 2009) where synergies were identified.
- The Project prepared, with the support of the other regional projects (namely CopeMed II and MedSudMed), a publication listing all the documents produced by the Mediterranean projects since 1999 (FAO Mediterranean Projects Products: 1999- February 2009). In addition, a poster describing the regional projects aims and a leaflet on the activities of the AdriaMed Project were prepared and distributed during the COFI and the 33 GFCM session.
- AdriaMed continued to support the activities of the GFCM by funding the participation of 25 Adriatic experts in 9 GFCM meetings (both SAC and CAQ related) held in the intersessional period.

### **MedSudMed - “Assessment and Monitoring of the Fishery Resources and Ecosystems in the Straits of Sicily”**

9. The main goals of the MedSudMed Project, financed by the MiPAAF, are to support the scientific communities of the participating countries in the development of a monitoring system for the study of fishery resources and their ecosystems in the project area (GSAs 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 21), with particular focus on the standardisation of methodologies. In addition, the Project promotes the scientific cooperation between participating countries and supports development of national capacity. The activities carried out in 2009 followed the work plan approved by the 7<sup>th</sup> MedSudMed Coordination Committee held in Malta (Sliema, February 2009).

10. Following the communication of the Italian Donor, the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF), of its readiness to support a third phase of the MedSudMed Project, the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Division was requested by the Donor to perform a technical review of the Project to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the project's activities and to recommend any complementary measures that might be required for the improvement of the efficiency of the Project during a proposed third phase. Between March and July 2009 the Project staff and the consultant entrusted by FAO to carry out the technical review interviewed all the participating institutes cooperating with the Project (Research Institutions of Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, and Tunisia).

11. In addition, part of the work carried out during the intersessional period was devoted to the development of the conceptual and logical framework for the Project's new phase to be initiated in agreement with the Project's Donor, (MiPAAF). The Project also continued to cooperate with relevant institutions, primarily the other FAO sub-regional Projects in the Mediterranean and the GFCM, through the SAC and its Sub-Committees.

12. Additionally, the Project performed the following main activities:

### Demersal Fisheries Resources

- Progress was made in the harmonisation of sampling procedures and data processing in the Project area. A 3-day joint exercise on board within a trawl survey using the MEDITS protocol was held in the Maltese waters taking advantage from the national survey (Malta, July 2009). Researchers from the institutes of all the countries participating in MedSudMed (Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta and Tunisia) took part in this exercise.
- A working group on *Parapenaeus longirostris* and related fisheries was organised in Marsaxlokk, (Malta, October 2009) in cooperation with the CopeMed II Project. The working group was organized to initiate a joint preliminary stock assessment exercise on this species in the area. To this extent the existing knowledge on *P. longirostris* was reviewed, including spatial distribution of spawners and juveniles, biological parameters, fishing segments targeting the species. Preliminary results of this joint stock assessment of *P. longirostris* were presented at the SAC Sub Committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA, Spain November–December 2009)
- Progress continues in the description of spatial distribution of juveniles and spawners of fisheries target species with the aim of identifying nursery and spawning grounds. In particular, nurseries and spawning grounds of *Octopus vulgaris* and *Parapenaeus longirostris* in GSAs 15 and 16 were identified. Documents describing the results were produced and the distribution of nurseries and spawning grounds for *P. longirostris* were presented by the responsible scientists during the 11th session of the SAC Sub Committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA, Spain November–December 2009). In addition, the results of the identification of nurseries and spawning grounds and on the possible correlation of the sea temperature variations with the recruitment of *Octopus vulgaris* in GSAs 15 and 16 were presented at the Cephalopods International Advisory Council (CIAC '09) Symposium (Spain, September 2009).
- A field manual on macroscopic identification of maturity stages for the Mediterranean fisheries resources (i.e. bony fish, selachians, crustaceans and cephalopods) has been produced and published as MedSudMed Technical Document N. 21 and made available on the Project web site.

### Small Pelagic Fish resources

- The Project supported the joint processing and elaboration of the ichthyoplankton and acoustic data collected in the Libyan waters during summer 2008. Joint international teams from the Istituto Ambiente Marino Costiero of Mazara del Vallo (IAMC-CNR, Italy), the Marine Biology Research Centre (MBRC, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) and the Russian Federal Research Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography (VNIRO) participated to the data analyses which were carried out as follows:
  - The ichthyoplankton sample processing was held in two sessions (i.e. April and May 2009) at the IAMC-CNR of Mazara del Vallo (Italy). A description of the oceanographic

characteristics of the area covered by the survey and the composition and spatial distribution of the ichthyoplankton was produced, hence complementing information on transport patterns of eggs and larvae of commercial fish species in the Project area.

- An ad hoc meeting to discuss the results obtained from the elaboration of the data collected during the surveys carried out in Libyan waters in 2006 and 2008 was held at the IAMC–CNR of Mazara del Vallo (Italy, May 2009).
- The acoustic data processing and elaboration was held in December 2009 at the MBRC (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya). The exercise produced estimates of the biomass of some small pelagic fishes in the area covered by the survey.

### **MedSudMed Portal and Fishery and Ecosystem Information System (FEIS)**

- The MedSudMed portal has been further developed and updated. A new section describing information on the fisheries for the countries participating in the MedSudMed Project was created and national Country Fishery Information sheets (CFI) are now available on the website. The CFI have been prepared according to a standardized format developed by the AdriaMed Project and adopted by all the other FAO sub-regional Projects in the Mediterranean.
- During the 7th MedSudMed Coordination Committee meeting (Sliema, Malta, February 2009) the importance to have the MedSudMed Fishery and Ecosystem Information System (FEIS) under the GFCM auspices was recalled and agreed on by the GFCM representative. Accordingly, the Coordination Committee identified the hand-over of this tool to the GFCM as the final task for the MedSudMed Project on this component. During the reporting period preliminary contacts with the GFCM to plan the foreseen hand-over were taken.

### **Training**

- Two *ad hoc* training activities on the growth of white shrimp (*Metapenaeus monoceros*) and on age determination of fish through otolith reading were organized and carried out respectively at the IAMC–CNR of Mazara del Vallo (Italy, August 2009), in collaboration with the INSTM of Sfax (Tunisia); and at the Marine Biology Research Centre of Tajura (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, November 2009) in collaboration with the IAMC–CNR of Mazara del Vallo.
- On-the-job training exercise was carried out during the MEDITS survey in Malta (Malta, July 2009) for scientists from the MBRC (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) and INSTM (Tunisia).
- On the job trainings were carried out during the ichthyoplankton and acoustic data processing and elaboration at the IAMC–CNR Mazara del Vallo (Italy, April and May 2009) and at the MBRC of Tajura (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, December 2009). Scientists were trained on: zooplankton and pelagic larvae sorting, identification and counting; sediments classification and quantitative data elaboration; acoustic data elaboration for the estimation of the total biomass of pelagic fish;

### **Regional Cooperation**

- In order to strengthen international and regional cooperation the Project interacts closely with the FAO Regional Project AdriaMed, CopeMed II and ArtiFiMed. In particular the Project participated in: i) 10th AdriaMed Coordination Committee meeting (January, 2009); ii) AdriaMed Working Group on demersals (Croatia, June 2009); and iii) second CopeMed II Coordination Committee meeting, (Morocco, June 2009). In addition, due to the overlap in

geographical areas covered by MedSudMed and CopeMed II, it was agreed to coordinate the participation of national scientists in meetings organized by the GFCM, in order to optimize the use of human and financial resources (e.g the co-organized working group on *Parapenaeus longirostris*.) In this framework, the Project provided support to the activities of the GFCM by funding the participation of 5 experts from the Project area in the meetings organized by the FAO–GFCM during the intersessional period.

- The Project contributed to the preparation, in cooperation with the AdriaMed and CopeMed II Projects, of a publication listing all the documents produced by the Mediterranean projects since 1999 (FAO Mediterranean Projects Products: 1999 - February 2009). In addition, a poster describing the regional projects aims and a leaflet on the activities of the AdriaMed Project were prepared and distributed during the COFI and the 33 GFCM session.

### **CopeMed II “Coordination to Support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean”**

13. The objective of the project “Coordination to support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean” (CopeMed phase II) is to maintain the sustainability of the marine resources in the Western and Central Mediterranean sub-regions and their ecosystem, taking into account environmental, biological, economical, social and institutional issues, and promoting scientific cooperation among the regions. Phase one of the Project was financed by the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional. The second phase is co-financed by the Secretaría del Mar de España, and the European Community.

14. According to the guidance given by the Steering Committee during the 2nd Coordination meeting in Tangier (Morocco, June 2009), intersessional activities were conducted by CopeMed II on the following project’ components:

#### **Strengthening national capacity in the field of fisheries statistics**

- Proposals to improve the national system and/or technical assistance for collection of data and information at national level (GFCM Task1 and fleet registration) were sent by Morocco, Malta, Algeria, Tunisia and Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.
- The project organised a task force with experts from FAO and GFCM on statistics to visit Morocco and Tunisia. A visit to Morocco was carried out in February 2009 and a proposal for cooperation between the three national institutions, ONP, DGPA and INRH with the support of the GFCM Secretariat and CopeMed II to improve their communication systems was agreed by the partners. New actions will be implemented in Morocco during 2010.
- General request on statistics and/or biological sampling were sent by the national focal points from Algeria and Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The project is waiting to receive more details on the actual needs of each country.
- An informal meeting with 2 experts on statistics (from the fisheries administration and the national research institution) from Tunisia was held in Malaga during the SCs meeting. The presentation of a document on the weakness of the national statistics system in Tunisia during the SCESS session by the national expert and the discussions with the Project Coordinator will facilitate the preparation of new actions to be supported by CopeMed II in Tunisia.

## Strengthening fisheries research

- During the SAC inter-sessional period CopeMed II continued supporting different activities in the countries related with national fisheries research and SAC requests. These included, in particular: i) study of fisheries with common interest, as the crustaceans fishery (between Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Tunisia) in collaboration with MedSudMed, and the Alboran small pelagic fisheries (between the INRH, Morocco and the IEO, Spain), ii) participation of experts from Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria in SAC workshops on selectivity, logbooks and stock assessment working groups (Ancona, Italy) and Sub Committees meeting (Málaga, Spain); iii) organization for the participation of 2 experts from the CNRDPA (Algeria) in the Spanish ECOMED, for training on methodologies during the annual eco-acoustic research survey for the assessment of the small pelagic species, iv) new actions with the CNRDPA (Algeria) in collaboration with IEO (Spain) to reinforce their scientific capabilities on acoustic evaluations are progressing.
- A pilot project to implement the 40 mm square mesh size in bottom trawl gears in the subregion was started by organising a subregional meeting in Málaga, with the participation of regional experts from most members (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, France and Spain) and the EU. After the meeting a survey program in Morocco, promoted by CopeMed II in collaboration with the GFCM Secretariat and the INRH is progressing. New actions for the implementation of the 40 mm square mesh size should be carried out during 2010 in Morocco and Algeria.
- Other activities related with the countries and GFCM requests includes the support of CopeMed II to the revision of the GFCM Glossary; the support to the GFCM-CopeMed II task force on improving statistics in Morocco and Tunisia and the preparation of the Project' country fisheries profile for the Web, in coordination with the other FAO Mediterranean projects.

## Strengthening institutional capacity at national sub-regional levels

15. This component of CopeMed II requires the involvement of national fisheries research institutions, General Fisheries Directorates in the countries, the EU DG Mare, the GFCM, ICCAT, Mediterranean Fishers Associations and other stakeholders. In this framework, the activities carried out by the Project include:

- Discussion with different administrations on the opportunity that the project represents to reinforce the communication between different fisheries institutions, also at national level.
- Participation of the CopeMed II and ArtFiMed staff in Morocco in the "First Euro Mediterranean Meeting of Fisheries Cooperatives" in Tangier (12-13 November, Morocco). During this meeting the project supported the organisation and also presented 2 communications on fisheries cooperatives in the Mediterranean Sea and in Morocco.
- The second meeting of the Coordination Committee was carried out in Tangier (Morocco) in June 2009 and the new Programme of activities for CopeMed II and ArtFiMed presented by the project were endorsed by the Committee.
- Coordination of the project ArtFiMed. The results and stakeholders participation at local and national level could improve the capacities and knowledge referred to these fisheries in Morocco and Tunisia by preparing diagnostic reports, promoting the stakeholders' involvements in the processes.
- Regional coordination meetings on artisanal fisheries in Morocco and Tunisia were organised by CopeMed II/ArtFiMed in cooperation with the 2 national fisheries administrations.



Recommendations agreed during the coordination meeting in Gabès (Tunisia) and Tangier (Morocco) with other national and international projects focusing on artisanal fisheries in the two concerned countries were delivered to the fisheries administrations.

- Two new Web pages for ArtFiMed and CopeMed II have been created and the latter linked with the activities and products of COPEMED phase I and with the national institutions involved in the project

### **Strengthening regional cooperation**

- In order to strengthen international and regional cooperation the Project interacts closely with the other FAO Regional Project MedSudMed and AdriaMed by sharing transversal activities and co-financing different products (Project's Web pages; country's fisheries profiles; publications). In addition, AdriaMed and MedSudMed participated at the CopeMed II Coordination Meeting, (Tangier, Morocco, June 2009). Correspondence and contacts are usual between the different project's experts and informal meetings were carried out during the last Sub Committees meeting in Málaga (Spain, 31 November-4 December).
- CopeMed II and ArtFiMed cooperation with GFCM during the intersessional period, SCs Working Groups and SCs sessions include: Presentation of technical and progress documents on the project's activities at the transversal and Sub Committees sessions; Presentation of documents prepared by the national Institutions supported by CopeMed II. Supporting the participation of experts from Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria in different SAC meeting; Cooperation in the local organisation of the SCs sessions;
- To improve subregional cooperation and facilitate the implementation of new activities requested by the GFCM during the 33 Session and urgent activities proposed to CopeMed II by countries but that were not included in the original Project document, the Project staff prepared a proposal on complementary activities for funding and a request was sent to Spain in May 2009. During the Coordination Committee in Tangier (June 2009), the Spanish representative highlighted that Spain has always actively supported the collaboration among the Mediterranean countries and with the GFCM and the reinforcement of regional cooperation. He informed the Committee that the Spanish Government was analysing the extension of that support to CopeMed II by increasing the budget, to allow the Project to extend its activities in the countries and to facilitate the implementation of the GFCM Resolution and Recommendation on the 40 mm square mesh size in bottom trawl fisheries. At the beginning of December 2009 a Spanish Resolution (corresponding to an agreement between AECID, the Spanish Agency of Cooperation for the Development, and the SG Mar, Spanish General Secretary for the Sea, was sent to FAO to finance complementary regional activities of CopeMed II during 2010.
- Other subregional cooperation includes the collaboration of the CopeMed II staff with the IEO, Spain, in a course on Mediterranean fisheries prepared to train CNRDPA (Algeria) experts; with the Master on Fisheries Management organised by the CIHEAM and the University of Barcelona; the participation in the project "Alboran" led by the IUCN (Mediterranean office) in collaboration with the INRH, CNRDPA, IEO and other institutions from the three countries surrounding the Alboran Sea; the support of an expert from the Malta Centre for Fisheries Sciences to participate in a course in Ancona (Italy) on FLR methodology for stocks assessment purposes and, the organisation with the CNRDPA and other institutions from Italy and Spain of training of Algerian experts on standard methodologies for the appraisal of the demersal and small pelagic resources.

### **ArtFiMed - “Sustainable development of Mediterranean artisanal fisheries in Morocco and Tunisia”**

16. The objective of the ArtFiMed Project (Sustainable Development of Artisanal Mediterranean Fisheries in Morocco and Tunisia) is to contribute to reduce the poverty of the target artisanal fisheries communities by improving their livelihood in the respect of the ecosystems which they exploit as to contribute to improve positive integration of these communities in the dynamic which affects them directly, in particular the management of fisheries and the development of the coastal areas. Expected results concern three different levels: i) at the level of the three artisan communities where the project is carried out; ii) at country level (Morocco and Tunisia) and particularly lessons learned and promotion of the artisanal fisheries at national scale and, iii) at the GFCM level, strengthening the artisanal fisheries information and promoting lessons learned and methodologies at regional scale. The ArtFiMed project is funded by the Spanish Government through the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

17. CopeMed II coordinates the project under the general coordination of the FAO-FIMF Service. As CopeMed II, ArtFiMed started in March 2008. Following guidance given by the Coordination Committee of CopeMed II during the 2nd Coordination meeting (Tangier, Morocco, June 2009), intersessional activities were conducted by ArtFiMed on the following project's components:

#### **Contribute to improving the socio-economic situation and sustainable livelihood of the target communities in Morocco and Tunisia.**

- Diagnostics reports of the three sites have been produced by the two national project Personnel (NPP) supported by the project staff. These reports were disseminated in a participatory process with beneficiary communities and representatives of governments and local authorities, identifying priority needs and activities to be implemented by the project. An initial analysis of national stakeholders and actors was conducted as part of diagnostic reports.
- Thereafter, for each site, methodological documents to implement the priorities have been drafted to ensure the participatory and integrated approach, the involvement of all stakeholders during the implementation process and to seek development of synergies with other projects and initiatives affecting the artisanal sector in the ArtFiMed project region.
- To contribute to enhance the visibility of the project, to develop collaboration between the various projects working in artisanal fisheries and to involve concerned agencies for project activities implementation, ArtFiMed held 2 meetings on artisanal fisheries, involving Institutions, International Organizations, private sector, NGOs, research in the Gulf of Gabès in Tunisia and at the Tangier' region in Morocco.
- To contribute to improve the socio-economic situation, ArtFiMed promoted the groups' organization as the first step to have a single voice. The project organized activities with the artisanal actors (fishermen in Ghannouch and Diky and fish women in Akarit) and also met with different stakeholders (fishermen, administrations, sellers) to help and support the organizational process of cooperatives and/or improve the functioning of the existent. The Ghannouch fishermen organization has been created in December with the support of ArtFiMed. A process to interchange opinions and lessons learned between cooperatives already organized and working and the new ones is facilitated by the project. Diky and Ghannouch fishermen should meet experienced fishermen organization at the beginning of 2010.

- Training courses on complementary activities to the fisheries for women in Ghannouch and Akarit have been organized by the project, in close collaboration with local and national agencies in Gabès with the participation of the national women organization from Tunisia. Basic education and training on complementary activities for fishermen in Morocco and for his families are also been prepared to start in 2010.

**Promote and extend the results of the project to other artisanal areas based on lessons learned implemented methodologies.**

18. Different activities have been carried out during the first years to promote the lessons learned and extend the obtained results of ArtFiMed to other artisanal sites:

- A system of indicators was selected locally and subsequently will be extrapolated nationally and regionally; a monitoring system involving members of the fishing communities and professionals has been established in each site to collect fisheries-related information; a document has been drafted defining the ArtFiMed protocol for monitoring activities and indicators. The protocol could also be used at national or regional scale if necessary. A coordination and monitoring system has been developed and it is operational.
- The project reported regularly and met with local authorities and fisheries administrators in each country. Documents produced by the project were distributed to the stakeholders. During the first year a total 13 documents and internal reports were produced by ArtFiMed: two project coordination meeting reports, 3 initial diagnostic reports and 3 Diagnostic reports, 4 documents on methodologies (implementation and follow-up system) and two reports corresponding to the regional artisanal fisheries coordination meeting.
- In order to contribute to the dissemination of documents and information on the implementation of the actions, the project promote a website [www.faoartfimed.org](http://www.faoartfimed.org) is periodically updated.
- The project participated in different national and international meetings and Workshop, promoting the results obtained and the artisanal fisheries.

**Reinforce the information base on Mediterranean artisanal fisheries**

19. Information and data on national artisanal fisheries is extremely important for fisheries and other coastal activities management although countries carry out not periodical samplings. ArtFiMed, by preparing diagnostic report and follow-up methodologies should contribute to reinforce the national information and furthermore the regional information and databases. To improve this information base the project is:

- Coordinating and communicating its activities and promoting exchanges of experience between both countries.
- Supporting the organization of professional structures at national and international level, participating and sponsoring international Euro-Mediterranean Meeting and promoting the exchange of experience in this field nationally and internationally.
- The project initiated the preparation of a national day on artisanal fisheries in 2010 in each of the two target countries to promote results and discuss experiences in the field of artisanal fisheries, share lessons learned; improve the visualization of the artisanal fisheries at national

level and involve the fisheries administrations and the GFCM in the improvement of the conditions of the artisanal fisheries professionals and their families and to give rise to them that corresponds within the national fisheries system.

### **EastMed - “Scientific and Institutional Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean”**

20. The project’s longer-term development objective aims at contributing to the sustainable management of marine fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean, and thereby at supporting national economies and protecting the livelihoods of those involved in the fisheries sector. The project’s immediate objective aims at supporting and improving the capacity of national fishery departments to increase their scientific and technical information base for fisheries management and to develop coordinated and participative fisheries management plans in the Eastern Mediterranean sub-region. The project is co-financed by the Government of Greece, the Government of Italy and the European Community.

21. 2009 has seen the formal initiation of the EastMed project. The funding from Greece was confirmed and sent to FAO, as well as the funding components from Italy and the EC.

22. The Project Coordinator has been selected and appointed, and the project headquarters, in Athens, Greece, have been officially set at the project disposal.

23. The project has already supported some actions, like the participation of scientists from the Eastern Mediterranean in the GFCM Stock Assessment Working Groups, that took place in Ancona, Italy, in October 2009, and in the GFCM Sub-Committees meeting (Malaga, Spain, November-December 2009).

24. The first months of the project have been dedicated mostly to setting in place the organization of the project, and all the Administrative procedures, but in 2010 it will start its technical activities, including the recruitment of the Fisheries Expert, that should be recruited within the first semester of the year. The Project will support the development of regionally-consistent fisheries management plans among the Eastern Mediterranean countries through the monitoring of commercial fisheries and the developing of fishery research and management capacity. The project is planned to run for five years. It will work with the member countries to strengthen programmes necessary for the implementation of rational, responsible and participative fisheries management. The project will be implemented in accordance with the principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and will encourage the use of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF).

### **MedFisis - “Mediterranean Fisheries Statistics and Information System”**

25. The MedFisis project was conceived to promote and develop a Mediterranean Fishery Statistics and Information System with the ultimate objective of achieving a region-wide integrated system as outlined by the MedStat adaptive approach.

26. The project is jointly financed by the European Community and FAO. During the intersessional period, the activities of the project were concentrated on a reformulation of the project proposal to the EC, so as to secure the funding necessary for completing the third year of the project. This proposal was completed and sent to the Commission, and subsequently approved for funding. After

the first instalment of the funding is received in FAO, the third year of the project will start in January 2010. This third year will concentrate on concluding the tasks still pending, and on supporting the development of a new project proposal for supporting the Mediterranean countries in the collection, processing and analysis of fisheries statistics in the region, as required by the member countries from the region.

**MED-LME Fisheries - “Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem – Regional Component: Implementation of agreed actions for the protection of the environmental resources of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas” – Conservation of Biological Diversity – Implementation of SAP-BIO and related NAPs**

27. The project “Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem. Regional Component: Implementation of agreed actions for the protection of the environmental resources of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas” includes, as its component 3, the “Conservation of biological diversity: Implementation of SAP BIO and related NAPs”. This component of the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean LME in turn has two main sub-components, 3.1: conservation of coastal and marine diversity through the development of a Mediterranean MPA Network and 3.2. Promote the sustainable use of fisheries resources in the Mediterranean through the development and application of ecosystem-based management approaches. FAO, in close cooperation with the GFCM Secretariat and with the support of the regional Projects, prepared the “fisheries component” of the project and will be the Executing Agency for subcomponent 3.2, and for part of component 3.1

28. The objective of Sub-Component 3.2 is to increase the ability of coastal nations to utilise coastal and high seas resources through the adoption of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management and the application of targeted interventions to reduce bycatch and other unsustainable fishing practices. The Sub-Component will focus on the dissemination of the ecosystem approach to Fisheries, on by-catch of regionally important species at a fleet level and on unsustainable fishing practices at regionally- representative Marine Protected Areas (MPA’s). The duration of the project is five years.

29. The Project Management Unit (PMU), that is based at the UNEP/MAP offices in Athens, Greece, was set up, and all the staff of the project PMU, have been recruited. The Agreements with the Partners involved in the Action, including FAO, have been prepared, discussed and signed.

30. During the Inception phase, that will be completed in February 2010, the first meeting of the Strategic Partnership Coordination Group was organized, and took place in Athens, Greece, in September 2009. During this meeting, the different partners discussed the current status of the work and agreed to review the detailed work-plan, activities and budget, for agreement at the First Steering Committee Meeting, to be held most likely in April/May 2009.

31. These documents were prepared and sent to the project PMU, and the inception meeting will be carried out in Montenegro during February 2010, preceding immediately the first meeting of the Strategic Partnership Steering Committee.

32. It is expected that the project activities, and particularly those of the fisheries component, will be initiated shortly after the approval of the revised work plan and budget. It was agreed by all partners that a request will be sent to UNEP and GEF for extending the project’s end to 2014, thus ensuring an effective duration of about 4,5 years, and reducing the inconvenients created by the late start of the project.

**Black Sea project**

33. During the intersessional period, FAO, in consultation with the GFCM Secretariat, completed the proposal for the preparatory phase which will lead to the formulation of the full phase of the “Scientific and Institutional Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Black Sea” (BlackSea) project. During the preparatory phase, a formulation mission will be fielded to meet the appropriate national institutions of the potential participating countries and participatory workshops will be organised with relevant stakeholders. The Project Document proposal will be discussed with all concerned and submitted to potential donors for funding approval. project document and sent it to the Turkish authorities.

34. This proposal was sent to the Turkish authorities, who had indicated their willingness to financially support the preparatory phase, during the second quarter of 2009. The Turkish authorities are currently completing their internal consultation and clearance process for allowing the utilisation of the funding and the initiation of the actual activities of the preparatory phase.