



**GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION  
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COMMISSION GÉNÉRALE DES PÊCHES  
POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE**



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**First GFCM Framework Programme (2013-2018) in support of  
the Task Force for the promotion of Sustainable Development and  
Cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea**

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**Improving Rational Exploitation of Marine Capture Fisheries and  
Sustainable Aquaculture  
(FWP)**

**BACKGROUND**

The marine ecosystems of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea are of paramount importance for the industry, economy and food production of coastal communities as well as for the various users of coastal areas, the protection of coastal zones from adverse climate conditions and the survival of many marine species. In order to respond to current stresses to these ecosystems, with particular reference to the need for a more rational exploitation of marine living resources and the aim of also tackling emerging issues in both marine capture fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the General Fisheries Commission of the Mediterranean (GFCM) is planning to contribute to the pursuance of an increasingly integrated approach to maritime policy in its area of competence. To this end, a fully-encompassing view is essential for links within the marine ecosystems of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea - including at sub-regional level - to shed light on the interaction between the regional marine environment and its living resources on one side, and the economies and societies of coastal States on the other. Given the complexity inherent in such a task, a medium-term and flexible time frame should be envisaged for its execution. To this end, the GFCM is launching its first framework programme which aims to construct a GFCM regional and holistic vision of the management of fisheries and aquaculture. This programme is a tool to make the GFCM more functional, whilst providing adequate support to the activities launched under the Task Force, aimed at improving and modernizing the GFCM legal and institutional framework.

## THE GFCM FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

More precisely, the purpose of this document is to present a draft of the first “GFCM Framework Programme in support to the Task Force to promote Sustainable Development and Cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea - Improving Rational Exploitation of Marine Capture Fisheries and Sustainable Aquaculture in the medium term (2013-2018)” – hereafter called **FWP**. The shared vision within the GFCM is for the FWP to be the foundation of a continue process to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture enhance and consolidate their key role in the sustainable development of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea considering the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability. This programme has been envisaged as a platform that will promote sustainable development and cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea through multi-annual and multi-donor arrangements. With this as a goal, the FWP is intended to support the Commission in establishing long-term management plans for the fisheries exploited in the GFCM area. It is also aimed to strengthen intra-institutional cooperation and coordination of fisheries and aquaculture development at regional level through the implementation of a series of work packages that will also rely on a set of Memoranda of Understanding recently proposed by GFCM to other regional organizations with a competence on the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. In this regard, it is foreseen that under the umbrella of the FWP, and as relevant within the remit of identified areas of intervention, specific initiatives will be carried out by the GFCM together with partner organizations, which include the United Nations Environment Programme-Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP-MAP), the Black Sea Commission, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), EUROFISH and the Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network (MedPAN). Furthermore, the proposed structure for the FWP is expected to facilitate, vis-à-vis GFCM Members, the integration of knowledge, skills and processes relating to marine capture fisheries and aquaculture. As various FAO projects in the area of competence of the GFCM are already providing technical assistance to GFCM Members, it is worth underlining that the work packages to be identified under the FWP will have to be regarded as complementary to these. Therefore, the FWP has to be intended as a much needed tool to exploit commonalities and strengthen synergies between the GFCM and (i) said projects and (ii) other organizations operating in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea that have a sectoral competence, consistent with Memoranda of Understanding in place/to be adopted in the near future. Thus, within the remit of the FWP there will be opportunities to optimize the use of resources and avoid duplications in accordance with the current need for a strengthened and more rational environmental governance.

The FWP should be seen as the strategic frame for the future of the Organization. It should serve as valuable support to the work of the Task Force aimed at improving and modernizing the GFCM legal and institutional framework. It should hence primarily pursue better sustainable development and cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea through the promotion of a more rational exploitation of marine capture fisheries and sustainable aquaculture, since these goals will ensure a more functional *modus operandi* of the GFCM. As it is known, the need for both sustainable development and cooperation is critical at this moment when the international community is preparing the work of the “UN Conference on Sustainable Development” that will be held in Rio de Janeiro from 4 to 6 June 2012 (Rio + 20). This conference is expected to result in renewed political commitment to the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development and the GFCM therefore attaches great importance to it. As oceans and marine living resources is a topic on top of this conference’s agenda, the GFCM has already submitted its input for contribution to the zero draft and will continue to remain seized of developments relating both to preparation of Rio + 20 and

to the implementation of its outcomes. Bearing in mind the relevance of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries to achieve sustainable development in marine capture fisheries and aquaculture, the FWP will be particularly committed to the implementation of this instrument.

In pursuing the overarching objectives of sustainable development and cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the FWP will particularly take into account the priorities that are relevant in the context of the Rio + 20 at a regional level. These priorities include food security, poverty alleviation, resource supply shortage, lack of intra-institutional coordination among the organizations with sectoral competences over the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, combined impacts of human activities and climate change on said seas, etc. As they are all related to the pillars of sustainable development and should be addressed, as appropriate, jointly by the relevant organizations and projects operating in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the FWP will provide significant room for strengthening existing strategic cooperation and future partnerships.

## **FWP STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY**

In addition to a general background where the rationale for intervention of the GFCM Framework Programme is explained, including in relation to the importance of marine capture fisheries and aquaculture to foster sustainable development and cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, this document presents a bulk of work programmes in its second part. The work programmes that have been identified to operationalize the FWP - seven of them - correspond to thematic areas (Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries [EAF], Improving data collection and reporting capacity, Aquaculture, capture fisheries and Integrated Coastal Zone Management [ICZM], Marine Protected Areas [MPAs] and artificial reefs, Enhancing artisanal fisheries) or to geographical areas (Strengthening capture fisheries and aquaculture management in the Black Sea area, and Supporting capture fisheries and aquaculture in the Southern Mediterranean Sea). Although each work programme will necessarily have to be developed autonomously from the others, the FWP will support a holistic vision so that the consideration of each work programme can feed into a wider formulation process. The FWP will also serve as a platform upon which specific actions carried out by GFCM Members relating to marine capture fisheries and aquaculture can be reflected, if deemed adequate, to contribute to a shared understanding of the objectives pursued. This course of action will enable the GFCM, through its framework programme, to actively participate in fostering sustainable development and cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

Each work programme identified in the document will be addressed through medium-term work packages that will be launched in response to those priorities that GFCM Members want to be addressed. Together considered, these work packages will fit into the work programme they are related to and will in turn shape its content. In this document, wide-ranging information is provided only for the work programme (i.e. general background, current issues, rationale for intervention and objective) since the choice of the work packages to be launched under the work programmes should rest with GFCM Members. Because the FWP is of an evolving nature, it is foreseen that, once priorities have been identified by GFCM Members, specific proposals for work packages to be launched will be elaborated by the GFCM Secretariat, including together with interested GFCM Members, institutional partners and donors that might express interest in carrying out a given work package. As a result, the FWP will be followed up by *ad hoc* multi-annual and multi-donor arrangements.

Aside from specific and expected outputs and outcomes for each of the seven work programmes, the FWP will also contribute to:

- promote the use of best science to support the establishment of long term management plans for the Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries;
- strengthen the capacity of the national institutions notably in less developed countries (Greater Maghreb, Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea) to allow an effective implementation of measures established to ensure sustainable development and management of their fishing activities, including those carried out by small scale fisheries;
- contribute to foster a holistic vision incorporating the pillars of sustainable development in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, having regard both to the works of the Commission for Sustainable Development (which in 2014 is expected to consider oceans) and the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development;
- strengthen intra-institutional cooperation with partner organizations having a sectoral competence over the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and with existing FAO regional projects and initiatives with a view to build up complementarities and exploit commonalities and having in mind the need for better environmental governance;
- account for the priorities of GFCM Members whilst carrying out multi-annual work packages under identified work programmes;
- facilitate the consolidation of results and the examination of progress by means of review strategy that could also issue in/facilitate the elaboration of GFCM recommendations, national laws and joint policies with relevant organizations through a five-year time frame.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

For the past sixty years, GFCM has been building a partnership framework that established effective management cooperation for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in Mediterranean and Black Sea countries. It is now time to consolidate the results achieved over these 60 years and GFCM is moving towards a new legal and institutional framework as well as towards improved sustainability based on the best scientific knowledge as a firm foundation for new challenges in synergy with its partners, various stakeholders and member countries. This is the context in which these key notes on FWP have been conceived.

The FWP is a work in progress and has been prepared in support of the activities of the GFCM Task Force requested during the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the GFCM, held in Rome (9-14 May, 2011). The FWP document also represents a dynamic platform for discussion with potential donors and partners.