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GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Seventh Session

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**REPORT OF THE COORDINATION MEETING
OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES**

17 November 2003

Tangiers, Morocco

GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report of the Coordination Meeting of the Sub-Committees

17 November 2003

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OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee Coordinating Committee (SACCC) was held in Tangiers, Morocco on 17 November 2003. The meeting was opened by Professor Corrado Piccinetti, the Chairperson of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). He thanked the participants (Appendix A) for attending this third meeting of the Coordinating Committee and noted that this was the first time that such a meeting had been held immediately after a plenary session of the GFCM.

2. The main purpose of the meeting was to organize immediate follow-up to GFCM decisions concerning the SAC, in particular to distribute elements of the Programme of Work among subsidiary bodies and to determine a schedule for meetings. This would also require examination of certain matters of procedure, especially the functioning of the SACCC. The agenda of the meeting is given in Appendix B.

3. The participants agreed that the report of the meeting would be finalized by e-mail and would include an update by the Chairperson of the reference framework for the mandate of the SAC in 2004, including a distribution of activities for each sub-committee (Appendix C) and, as far as possible, additional Chairperson's suggestions on functional aspects of SAC subsidiary bodies (Appendix D) for discussion at the next coordination meeting.

MEETINGS OF THE SAC SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

4. The purpose of this item was to determine and reconcile the dates and venues of meetings of the working groups, sub-committees and SAC. These were broadly determined as follows:

- *Working group of the SCES* on socio-economic indicators: Barcelona, Spain, first quarter 2004;
- *Working groups of the SCSA*: parallel meetings (demersals and small pelagics) in Madrid or Malaga, Spain, in May 2004, immediately preceding the meeting of the SCSA, for a duration and with terms of reference to be specified as early as possible by the Coordinator of this sub-committee;
- *Sub-committees*: parallel meetings of the four sub-committees in Madrid or Malaga, Spain, in May 2004. The duration of each meeting would be determined by the respective Coordinator (2 to 3 days, as appropriate). Proceedings should close on the Wednesday;
- *SAC Coordinating Committee*: the Thursday after closure of the sub-committee meetings.

5. The exact dates and venues of the above meetings in May would be formally endorsed as soon as the local organizer (Spain/CopeMed) had confirmed them to the Secretary of the GFCM and to the Chairperson of the SAC.

6. The SACCC also agreed that the seventh session of the SAC should be planned for the first half of September 2004.

PROCEDURES AND RELATED ISSUES

7. The SACCC welcomed the Commission's willingness to reinforce or formalize procedures underlying the *modus operandi* of the SAC and its subsidiary bodies, in particular the need to set out terms of reference for the SAC Bureau¹, and to ensure more systematic liaison and involvement of National Focal Points with research institutes² and with the SAC Bureau. This would help refine formulation of multidisciplinary advice, particularly on fisheries management.³

8. The meeting invited each Coordinator to send their communications to all members of sub-committees and, as appropriate, to associated networks, with a copy for information to the Chairperson and the two Vice-Chairpersons of the SAC, as well as to the Secretary of the GFCM.

9. It was also agreed that, as far as possible, the Chairperson of the SAC or one of the two Vice-Chairpersons should attend meetings of the SAC subsidiary bodies (*ad hoc* working groups, expert groups, workshops, sub-committees, etc.).

10. Following discussions on the role of the National Focal Points and the participation of scientific experts at meetings, it was agreed that the Chairperson, with help from the Secretariat, would draw up criteria and/or suggested terms of reference for the Focal Points, Coordinators and the SACCC, taking already established procedures and mandates into account. These would then be discussed by the Coordinating Committee for finalization and presentation at the next session of the SAC. The formulation of more precise terms of reference for the Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagics could also be envisaged, in collaboration with the Deputy Executive Secretary of the ICCAT, responsible for coordinating its activities. The SACCC noted that the list of SAC National Focal Points and national correspondents of sub-committees, as updated during the 28th session, urgently needed to be further updated or completed.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

11. The SACCC welcomed the added precision that the Commission had given to the SAC's Programme of Work. The participants reviewed the Commission's priorities and noted the emphasis placed on: biological and socio-economic reference points, operational units, assessment of shared stocks not covered in recent years, identification of nursery areas and sensitive habitats, matters relating to driftnets, and the need to plan further activities to deal with illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

12. The SACCC invited the Chairperson to draw up a list of topics to be dealt with by each sub-committee, in the form of a summary reference framework to be attached to its report (Appendix C). This was to be based on the priorities stated in the report of the 28th session and the reference framework approved at the 27th session.

13. It also agreed that, in collaboration with their technical counterparts in the Secretariat, the Coordinators would draw up detailed terms of reference and/or annotated agendas in preparation for activities and meetings of each sub-committee and working party for which they were responsible. The directors of the regional projects were invited to indicate main activities envisaged to support implementation of the Programme of Work.

¹ Paragraph 19 of the report of the 28th Session, 2003.

² Paragraphs 27 and 28 of the report, 2003.

³ Paragraphs 60 and 61 of the report, 2003.

14. As regards the continuation of activities on fisheries technology, the Coordinating Committee specified that corresponding aspects, particularly those relating to gear capture capacity and selectivity, would be dealt in the framework of SCSA activities, while those relating to the impact of gear on ecosystems and devices to reduce the capture of protected species would be dealt with under the SCMEE.

15. The Coordinating Committee noted the importance given by the Commission to the regional projects (CopeMed, AdriaMed, Medsud and Medfisis), especially for fostering researcher participation in SAC activities and more generally for advancing its work, as well as the desire of the GFCM to have project activities more closely interconnected and linked to the general work of the SAC. For his part, the Chairperson of the SAC assured participants that he would make every effort to convince the appropriate authorities of the need to maintain existing regional projects and to initiate another project for the eastern Mediterranean.

16. Emphasis was also placed on the need for more systematic publication of appropriate scientific works in the GFCM *Studies and Reviews* series.

OTHER MATTERS

17. It was agreed that the Coordinating Committee would reconvene immediately after the meeting of the four SAC sub-committees in order to assess outcomes and suggest follow-up measures for the attention of the seventh session of the SAC.

18. It was also felt that the SACCC reports should be sent to the National Focal Points and made available to the SAC for information.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Corrado Piccinetti, Chairperson of the SAC

Costantina Karlou-Riga, 2nd Vice-Chairperson of the SAC

Matthew Camilleri, SCSi Coordinator

Mohamed Malouli Idrissi, SCESS Coordinator

Pere Oliver, SCSA Coordinator

Alain Bonzon, GFCM Secretary

Salvatore Coppola, GFCM Secretariat (SCISS)

Jordi Leonart, GFCM Secretariat (SCSA; SCMEE)

Rafael Robles, COPEMED Director

The other members of the Coordinating Committee:

Nicos Hadjistephanou, 1st Vice-Chairperson SAC

Alberto Garcia, SCMEE Coordinator

Cassandra De Young, GFCM Secretariat (SCESS).

Fabio Massa, ADRIAMED/MEDSUDMED Director

It was suggested that these be included :

Victor Restrepo, Coordinator of the GFCM/ICCAT Working Groups

J. Antonio Camiñas, Outgoing Chairperson of the SAC

AGENDA

OPENING OF THE MEETING

MEETINGS OF SAC SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

PROCEDURES AND RELATED ISSUES

PROGRAMME OF WORK

OTHER MATTERS

SUMMARY REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE MANDATE OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES IN 2004

The reference framework for the mandate of the SAC was approved by the 27th session of the GFCM for the period 2003-2004⁴ and other priority elements were approved by the 28th session of the Commission in Tangiers⁵. In addition, the 27th session⁶ of the GFCM requested that the SAC Chairperson determine priority activities, based on available inputs and achievements during the intersessional period. A distribution of tasks for each sub-committee is thus proposed below.

This summary reference framework for SAC activities is basically intended to specify, integrate and allocate components of the Programme of Work for action by the different bodies. To be complete, the Programme of Work should also include: a detailed account (terms of reference/annotated provisional agenda) of envisaged activities/meetings for each body and for the thematic or cross-sectional working groups, such as the joint GFCM/ICCAT groups, as well as an indication of the main activities envisaged by the regional projects to support implementation of the priorities identified by the Commission for the SAC.

1. Marine environment and ecosystems (SCMEE)

Priority:

- Identification of sensitive habitats.

Mandate:

- Update information on the incidental catch of protected species and the by-catch of large migratory sharks (2.1 Appendix H, 2002).
- Update information on the mapping of key fish habitats (2.2 Appendix H, 2002).
- Provide an overview of the impact of driftnet and surface gillnet fisheries, by main basin and geographical sub-area (GSA) (2.3 Appendix H, 2002).
- Analyse the impact of surface and bottom longline fisheries on non-commercial fish, birds and turtles (2.4 Appendix H, 2002).
- Gather information on mucilaginous algae blooms (2.5 Appendix H, 2002).
- Describe selected species assemblages with trophic and biological links (2.6 Appendix H, 2002).

2. Stock assessment (SCSA)

Priorities:

- Stock assessment in the GSAs not covered by assessments in 2002-2003.
- Activities relating to biological reference points.
- Identification of nursery areas.

⁴ Appendix H of the Report of the 27th session, 2002.

⁵ Paragraphs 72 and 73 of the report of the 28th session, 2003.

⁶ Paragraph 88 of the report, 2002.

Mandate:

- Update the list of shared stocks and identify the GSAs (1.1 Appendix H, 2002).
- Increase knowledge of shared stocks (1.1 Appendix H, 2002).
- Submit scientific assessment and advice on the list of priority species (1.1 Appendix H, 2002).
- Review and discuss stock assessment methods (1.3 Appendix H, 2002), adopting a more holistic approach to fisheries management (paragraph 60, 2003).
- Take into account knowledge of nursery areas and the outcomes of experiments aimed at improving exploitation patterns (1.5 Appendix H, 2002).
- Consider the multispecies nature of fisheries to improve multispecies stock assessment (paragraph 61, 2003).
- Examine different methods of reducing fishing effort (paragraph 63, 2003).
- Continue work on identification of biological reference points (paragraph 72, 2003).

3. Statistics and information (SCISS)*Priorities:*

- Update, at local level and by GSA, the inventory of operational units involving shared stocks.

Mandate:

- Define operational units involving shared stocks; to this end, as necessary, fine-tune the fleet segmentation adopted at the fifth session of the SAC (1.1, 1.2 Appendix H, 2002 and paragraph 65, 2003).
- Identify the spatial distribution of operational units (1.1 Appendix H, 2002) and coordinate implementation of pilot projects for the Alboran Sea (CopeMed) and Adriatic (AdriaMed), (paragraph 65, 2003).
- Promote implementation of the Medfisis project and integration of existing databanks.
- Carry out a review, by GSA, of data on fleet segments/operational units using drifting gillnets.

4. Economic and social sciences (SCESS)*Priorities:*

- Socio-economic indicators and reference points.
- Pilot tests of bioeconomic models of operational unit management.

Mandate:

- Test the monitoring of operational units using bioeconomic models (e.g. BEMMFISH) for comparison with stock assessment results (Appendix H, 1.3, 2002; paragraphs 60 and 61, 2003).
- Pursue and broaden studies on socio-economic indicators associated with identification of reference points (paragraph 65, 2003).
- Develop indicators for monitoring markets and capture distribution systems (paragraph 17, 2003).
- Integrate the work of the CopeMed legal group and similar AdriaMed studies (comparative study of fisheries management provisions in national legislations) in the work of the SCESS (paragraph 35, 2003).

PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF OPERATING PROCEDURES OF SAC SUBSIDIARY BODIES

A. BACKGROUND

The terms of reference of the SAC are laid down in article X.2 (d) of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, as amended at its 22nd Session (1997). Accordingly, the first session of the SAC in 1999 specified the structure, mandate and functioning of its subsidiary bodies, which were endorsed by the Commission at its 24th Session. The Committee's *modus operandi* has gradually evolved since then to reflect reality. This development should be formally recognized.

1. On the structural level

The GFCM has established three thematic sub-committees (stock assessment: SCSA, environment: SCMEE, socio-economics: SCESS and one cross-sectional sub-committee on statistics: SCISS). It has agreed that the SCA can call upon *ad hoc* working groups to address specific issues (e.g. Working Group on Management Units) and that, as appropriate, joint activities of subsidiary bodies should be encouraged (e.g. Working Group on Operational Units, recently integrated into the SCIS to facilitate coordination). It has thus extended the *ad hoc* Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagics and has established an *ad hoc* Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Tuna Farming. Sub-committees can also use specific working groups. The SCSA currently receives support from two working groups (small pelagics and demersals); the SCMEE also has two groups (anthropogenic effects/technology and environment/ecosystem), which are currently suspended; and the SCESS receives input from the working group on socio-economic indicators.

At its 27th session⁷, the Commission took note of the SAC's view that meetings of sub-committee Coordinators were essential for it to function properly. At its 28th session⁸, the Commission was informed of proposals to broaden the mandate and membership of the Coordinating Group of the Sub-Committees by enlarging the SAC Bureau⁹, whose functions could be equated with those of an Executive Committee or Council. This is now referred to as the "Coordinating Committee of the SAC". In this connection, it was noted that specific terms of reference needed to be established for this Bureau for submission to the Commission for approval¹⁰ (see below).

2. On the functional level

The reform of 1997 has not affected the traditional mode of operation of GFCM's non-statutory subsidiary bodies; in other words, SAC continues to operate essentially on the basis of scientific and technical contributions from national experts and their voluntary attendance of meetings.

A Coordinator¹¹ has been appointed for each sub-committee, charged with preparing and moderating its meetings, drawing upon the expertise of corresponding research and scientific networks. The Coordinator's work was to be facilitated by identifying a thematic correspondent or focal point for each country and by designating a "facilitator" to monitor the activities of any given *ad hoc* working group. This arrangement was in turn expected to facilitate the work of the SAC National Focal Points who are formally appointed by their respective government.

⁷ Paragraph 16 of the report.

⁸ Paragraphs 19 and 71 of the report.

⁹ Paragraph 26 of the report.

¹⁰ Paragraph 19, report of the 28th session.

¹¹ Paragraph 38 of the report of the 1st session of the SAC, 1999.

Recent GFCM sessions have repeatedly noted the need to strengthen these arrangements. The Commission drew attention to¹² the need for a system of ongoing involvement in SAC work, based on Member States honouring their obligations and responsibilities to the Commission, and not only on the personal initiative of individual scientists. The Commission was alluding in particular to the expected role of National Focal Points in liaising between the technical level and the fisheries management authorities. They were thus expected to facilitate coordination with institutes at national level, to secure budgetary resources and to encourage experts to participate in the work of the SAC. The Commission has invited its Members to keep an updated list of National Focal Points¹³.

3. On the practical level

The SAC's principal mandate to evaluate, integrate and assemble the recommendations and advice it receives from its subsidiary bodies, for the subsequent approval of the Commission. The following general considerations could therefore apply for the organization of work and participation in activities of SAC subsidiary bodies.

1. Organization of work :

- a) SAC bodies need to have access to the most advanced scientific knowledge and all information on a given topic if their management advice is to be solidly grounded;
- b) a distinction needs to be made between the open phase of gathering thematic scientific information and the phase of addressing issues raised by the GFCM, which might require more subtle multidisciplinary analysis of the subject matter in question, particularly for the formulation of advice on fisheries management;
- c) continuity of participation of scientists and experts in networks generates added value, especially in building institutional memory and knowledge of procedures, regulations and precedents;
- d) a balanced contribution of experts from different member countries is required during advice and recommendation formulation to substantiate its content;
- e) liaison mechanisms should function in real time to provide regular information flow, greater transparency and better returns on human and material investment;
- f) each meeting should end with a report or minutes, to which scientific contributions can be appended as appropriate.

2. Participation in the work:

- a) Participation in the meetings of sub-committees and cross-sectional working groups that prepare advice and recommendations for the attention of the SAC, based on existing scientific and technical literature, should be limited to experts of national scientific institutions working continuously with the SAC and to experts appointed by sub-regional projects to present contributions;
- b) the SAC National Focal Point should inform the Coordinator of each sub-committee of the national institution(s) able to provide a scientific and/or technical contribution on the specific topic in question, bearing in mind the need for continuity in that particular research area;
- c) participation in the activity of working groups that involves the compilation and analysis of all available information should be open to all members of networks linked to the sub-committees; that is, to all public- or private-sector scientists and experts concerned who have expressed an interest and are in a position to provide a useful input.

¹² Paragraph 27, report of the 28th session.

¹³ Paragraph 28, report of the 28th session.

In other words, the whole system hinges upon the Coordinators who need to be able to organize the work in such a way as to maximize the gathering of information and optimize its analysis. The active involvement of the National Focal Points is essential for the system to function properly and, ideally, terms of reference should be drawn up to spell out their role.

B. THE SAC BUREAU AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE

1. Membership

Besides the representatives of the Secretariat (including the sub-regional project leaders), the Commission endorsed¹⁴ the following membership of the SAC Bureau and Coordinating Committee (SACCC):

- 1) The Bureau *stricto sensu*: The Chairperson and the two Vice-Chairpersons of the SAC¹⁵.
- 2) The Coordinating Committee: the Bureau (1); the Coordinators of the four current sub-committees.

It is suggested that the outgoing SAC Chairperson and the Coordinator of the Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Groups also be included in the Coordinating Committee.

2. Proposed mandate of the CCSCS

- Propose and/or update elements of the reference framework for the mandate of the SAC for the intersessional period and plan the distribution of activities among sub-committees;
- promote organization of and participation in interdisciplinary or cross-sectional working groups answering directly to the SAC;
- examine the reports of the interdisciplinary or cross-sectional working groups and sub-committees and prepare proposals for an integrated Programme of Work of the SAC;
- collate draft recommendations of subsidiary bodies and formulate, as appropriate, multidisciplinary advice on fisheries management for examination by the SAC;
- function as editing committee for the selection of scientific and technical documents to be published in the GFCM *Studies and Reviews* series;
- conduct any other task specifically requested by the Commission or the Scientific Advisory Committee, or approved by consensus by the members of the Coordinating Committee.

3. Proposed mandate of the Sub-Committee Coordinators:

- Maintain an updated list of the National Focal Points and experts participating in related networks, providing full contact details, and ensure the distribution of related information;
- encourage the participation of experts in sub-committee activities and their scientific and technical contributions;
- organize the activities of the sub-committee in such a way that they cover the issues raised by the GFCM and/or the SAC, in collaboration with the SAC Coordinating Committee;
- coordinate intersessional activities, notably the organization of sub-committee meetings and, as appropriate, in collaboration with the facilitator, those of the working groups, including preparation of the annotated provisional agenda and/or terms of reference;
- supervise the drafting of meeting reports, including the presentation of attached appendixes/reference documents;

¹⁴ Paragraph 26, report of the 28^{ème} session.

¹⁵ Article X.6 of the GFCM regulations attributes *mutatis mutandi* to the SAC Bureau the terms of reference of the GFCM Bureau as stipulated in Article VIII of the same regulation.

- liaise with scientific and technical bodies of other international organizations dealing with topics of common interest;
- represent the sub-committee at meetings of the SAC Coordinating Committee, in particular for preparing work and advice for the SAC.

4. Distribution of major thematic areas in the terms of reference of each sub-committee¹⁶.

The terms of reference of each sub-committee include action needed to deal with issues raised by the GFCM or the SAC, especially on the following current topics or subject areas.

SCMEE

- marine environment, protected areas;
- biodiversity;
- ecosystems;
- protected species, fishing technology relating to species protection and ecological impact of fishing gear.

SCSA

- ecosystems approach to stock assessment;
- state of biological resources;
- reaction of stocks to changes in fishing effort;
- biological reference points;
- fishing technology in relation to capture and gear selectivity;
- juvenile concentration and nursery areas;
- closed seasons and zones.

SCSI

- design and management of databanks;
- storage and processing of statistical data: capture, fleets by segment and operational unit, fishing effort;
- coordination, improvement and harmonization of statistical information.

SCSS

- economic and social aspects of fisheries;
- monitoring of fleet capacity;
- juridical and institutional aspects;
- monitoring of market trends and fishery products, quality of production, economic and social indicators and reference points.

¹⁶ The terms of reference of the sub-committees are provided in Appendixes F and G of the report of the 1st Session of the SAC in 1999.