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GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Seventh Session

Rome, Italy, 19-22 October 2004

**REPORT OF THE COORDINATION MEETING
OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES*
Malaga, Spain, 13 May 2004**

* Available only in English

GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN
SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report of the Coordination Meeting of the Sub-committees

Malaga, Spain
13 May 2004

Opening of the Meeting

1. The SAC Coordination Meeting of the Sub-committees (CMSC) was held in Malaga, Spain, on 13 May 2004 following the sessions of the four SAC Sub-Committees (SCs). The Chairperson of SAC, Professor Corrado Piccinetti, opened the meeting and thanked CMSC members for their attendance. The list of participants is attached as Annex A.
2. The Chairperson alluded to the successful outcome of the SCs. It particularly emphasised the remarkable attendance recorded, both in terms of number of experts and of GFCM countries represented. Further, he wished to particularly underline the efforts made by the FAO Regional Projects to facilitate such level of participation, especially to SCESS¹, SCIS², and SCMEE³. He further informed the meeting on recent progress achieved concerning the launching of the formulation phase of the new sub-regional project, EastMed for covering the Eastern Mediterranean sub-region.
3. The need for an enhanced preparation of CMSC meetings was noted. It was agreed to make available in future an annotated provisional agenda prior to the meeting.

General observations

4. The Secretary of GFCM confirmed that the autonomous budget of GFCM entered into force on 14 April 2004 and therefore an Extraordinary Session of the Commission will be called upon, likely in July, to review a number of issues related to the implementation of this budget. He also confirmed the date and venue of the Fourth session of the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) and remarked that, as per SAC, an evaluation of CAQ has been carried out and will be reviewed at its forthcoming session in June. The Secretary also invited the participants to take note of the organization of the GFCM Workshop on Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing in the Mediterranean scheduled to take place in Rome on 23 and 26 June.

¹ Sub-committee on Social Sciences

² Sub-committee on Information and Statistics

³ Sub-committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystem

5. The CMCS briefly reviewed the report of the CMCS meeting, held in Tangier, Morocco, on 17 November 2003, following the 28th session of the Commission. The CMCS endorsed this report. It agreed that the attention of SAC should be called upon, especially on the annexes of the report which include draft terms of reference for the CMSC and for the Coordinators of the Sub-committees as well as suggestions to ameliorate the modus operandi of subsidiary bodies of SAC.

6. The possibility to ensure an effective follow up to the findings and suggestions made in the Report of the Meeting of Experts on the appraisal of SAC achievements since 1999, was raised. Mention was made that this report remarked, *inter-alia*, that the current mode of operation of SAC did not encourage the integration of disciplines, especially for the formulation of sound management advice. The CMCS noted that GFCM reviewed the report on SAC achievements at its Twenty-eighth session. The Commission agreed that SAC should promote problem-solving and task oriented approaches. GFCM further acknowledged that the report would form a useful basis for further discussions when the Commission will be endowed with an autonomous budget. The CMSC expressed the wish that the report on the appraisal of SAC achievements should also be discussed by SAC, as the Committee had no chance, until now, to review it and provide comments to the Commission.

7. The Chairman of SAC informed the meeting on the current state of the GFCM list of National Focal Points and Correspondents. While noting with satisfaction that the list has been further developed, the CMCS observed that there was still a need to complete it and to post it on the GFCM web-site, as a mean to promoting liaison, networking and accountability among the various stakeholders concerned.

8. In the issuing discussion, the question was raised on whether it would be more effective to have only one SAC National Focal Point for each country instead of having as well, one National Correspondent for each of the four SCs. CMSC confirmed that the national correspondent system was promoted to ensure timely conveying of information from each SCs to, and from, experts participating to networks as well as, to maintain direct contact with Coordinators and the respective FAO/GFCM Secretariat backstopping Officers. The CMSC called upon the Coordinators to pursue efforts in maintaining networks and requested the Secretariat to further update and promote the validation of the list.

Coordination of the work of the Sub-Committees

9. The Coordinating Meeting briefly reviewed the state of implementation of the priorities laid down in the Reference Framework for the work of SAC, as updated by the 28th session of the Commission. The request of GFCM to promote the assessments of shared multi-species fisheries and to back up the scientific advice from SCSA with social and economic analysis was noted. Sub-committees were invited to primarily attempt providing clear answers to requests made by the SAC when formulating their conclusions and recommendations, and only secondarily concentrate on developing their own research agenda.

10. It was brought to the attention of CMSC that the facilitators of the two SCSA Working groups could not attend the SC session due to financial constraints. The Coordinating Meeting agreed to call the attention of SAC on the proposal that travelling and subsistence costs of Facilitators and Coordinators of Sub-Committees should be supported in future by the GFCM autonomous budget.

11. Each Coordinator briefed the CMSC on the work carried out by their respective SC, listing in particular the main conclusions and recommendations formulated as per the concerned Sub-committee report. On this basis, CMSC reviewed the following issues of common concern among SCs.

12. The CMSC noted that in the case of multidisciplinary or transversal topics (such as Operational Unit), every effort should be made to ensure that individual results from the Sub-committee(s) concerned are, as possible, harmonized and integrated. Considering the high priority of the work on Operational Units, this may require dedicating a full day of an *ad hoc* “inter-Committees meeting”. Another example was provided in relation with current work on the measurement of fishing effort: a common concern would be the difficulty of applying current international standards, that is, the Gross Tonnage (in stead of GRT). SCIS and SCESS were invited to consider this issue, subject to further guidance from the SAC. Some conclusions or recommendations emanating from a SC may also call in the expertise of other SCs which therefore should possibly be involved. For instance, a salient case would concern some of the SCSA advice which often require to be integrated with economic and social considerations. Similarly, there was a need for SCSA and SCMEE to better integrate the work on sensitive habitat. The possible integration of MEDIT into the GFCM data base would require, as well, interaction between SCIS and SCSA. In addition, an SC should be able, when relevant, to suggest to another SC addressing a specific questions to complement on going work of the former.

13. More generally, it was observed that SC reports would need to follow similar standard and, when appropriate, terminology. This would facilitate their presentation (and discussion) at SAC. The CMSC urged those responsible to make every effort to ameliorate the status of the reports and particularly the formulation of recommendations.

14. Another area of common interest for all the four SCs is the development of the GFCM website. The CMSC reiterated the importance of ensuring proper dissemination of technical and scientific documents. The meeting noted, however, the need to avoid improper use of document source or incorrect document citation. The question of the criteria, standards and procedures to be followed to address the current open access system (including through specific FAO ftp service) to the various working documents of SAC subsidiaries was especially raised. The CMSC therefore concurred that for such purpose both dedicated staff and some sort of quality and adequacy control would be needed for documents to be made available on GFCM website, taking into consideration FAO standards. It was felt that this issue still needed to be clarified by the Committee. In addition, it was noted that the availability of a Web-master would need to be considered in the near future.

15. A related issue was the convenience to increase the number of publications in the GFCM “*Studies and Reviews Series*”, including relevant work of regional projects of global interest and selected papers presented at the various SAC meetings. However, requirements in terms of criteria to be apply and again, availability of dedicated staff time was raised as potential constraints. The CMSC alluded to the possibility of establishing a peer review board or alike for this purpose. The CMSC took note of the envisaged publications that the Secretariat was wishing to publish, often jointly with CopeMed and AdriaMed, in the GFCM *Series*. The meeting was further informed that the proceedings and papers presented at the SAC/SCSA “Workshop on Reference Point” (Rome, 20-21 April 2004) will be published in a special issue of the journal *Biologia Marina Mediterranea* together with the papers presented at a national Italian meeting on the same topic held in January 2004. Selected papers of direct relevance to SAC query on this subject will be published as a specific issue in the GFCM *Studies and Review Series*.

16. With regard specifically to the Sub-committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA), the Meeting noted with concern that little new data and/or assessment had been presented. The necessity to integrate scientific advice as formulated by the SCSA with social and economic data was again highlighted, especially with reference to a proposal about the reallocation of part of Moroccan bottom trawl fishing effort from coastal to deeper waters. It was further considered highly desirable to make available integrated data on shared stocks and on nurseries at the next session of SAC.

17. On biological Reference Points, the meeting noted the need to provide SAC with clearer recommendations. Testing reference points through pilot projects was suggested. The need for SCESS to initiate reflecting on socio-economic reference points was also mentioned.

18. The CMSC was informed that Mr Pere Oliver, Coordinator of SCSA, resigned and that the Sub-committee proposed Ms Constantina Karlou-Riga to be nominated as the new Coordinator. The CMSC supported this nomination.

Coordination with Intergovernmental and Non governmental organisations in the Mediterranean

19. The status of the joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Party on Large Pelagic within the frame of SAC Subsidiaries was questioned. CMSC suggested that the drafting of proper or revised terms of reference for this body would help clarifying the issue.

20. The scope and outcome of the ACCOBAMS “Coordination Meeting on the mitigation of interactions cetaceans-fishing activities” held in FAO (Rome, 19– 20 April 2004) on discards of marine mammal by-catch were also mentioned and possible collaboration in this respect was encouraged.

21. The CMSC was informed of the results of the IUCN Legal Workshop, entitled “Towards an Improved Governance of the Mediterranean beyond territorial Sea”, and held in Malaga, Spain, 15-16 March 2004. It invited the Secretariat to follow-up on this initiative.

22. The CMSC acknowledged the establishment of the Association of Professional Fishers for the Mediterranean (MEDISAMAK) and invited SAC to provide guidance on possible working relationship with this entity.

Any other matters

23. The status of the FAO regional Projects was briefly reviewed. The CMSC strongly commended the achievements reached in the various field by the Regional Projects. Moreover, the CMSC fully concurred that, on the basis of the current experience, without the Regional Projects' initiatives and actions, it would have been very difficult for SAC to fulfil its tasks and to obtain results.

24. Lastly, the former Chairperson of SAC, Juan Antonio Camiñas and the collaborators from his Institute, as well the Government of Spain, were gratefully thanked for the effective and extremely successful organization and hosting of the SC meetings, in Malaga. Rewards were also made to CopeMed for the support provided in this respect.

Annex A

List of Participants

Alain Bonzon, GFCM Secretary

Corrado Piccinetti, SAC President

Nicos Hadjistephanou, 1st SAC Vice President

Costantina Karlou-Riga, 2nd SAC Vice President and SCSA Coordinator

Mohamed Malouli Idrissi, SCESS Coordinator

Alberto Garcia, SCMEE Coordinator

Matthew Camilleri, SCSA Coordinator

J. Antonio Camiñas, former SAC President

Salvatore Coppola, GFCM Secretariat (SCSI)

Cassandra De Young, GFCM Secretariat (SCESS)

Jordi Leonart, GFCM Secretariat (SCSA, SCMEE)

Piero Mannini, FAO-AdriaMed Expert (Rapporteur)

Fabio Massa, FAO-AdriaMed Coordinator

Rafael Robles, FAO-CopeMed Coordinator