

**EUROPEAN UNION PROPOSAL FOR A GFCM RECOMMENDATION**

**on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries on demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

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

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

*RECALLING* the Guidelines on precautionary conservation measures pending the development and adoption of GFCM multiannual management plans for relevant fisheries at sub-regional levels in the GFCM area agreed during its 37<sup>th</sup> Session;

*NOTING* that the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) has recurrently considered demersal stocks overexploited in GSA 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16;

*CONSIDERING* that the state of stocks as assessed by the SAC calls for the development and adoption of management measures aimed at ensuring the conservation of demersal stocks in the area with the view of adopting as soon as possible a multiannual plan;

*CONSIDERING* the conclusions of the SAC Sub-regional Technical Workshop on Multiannual Management Plans that took place in October 2013;

*CONSIDERING* the socio-economic importance of fisheries exploiting demersal stocks and the need to ensure their sustainability;

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

**PART I**

**Scope and geographical area of application**

1. In order to ensure adequate conservation of demersal stocks, Members and cooperating non-Members (CPCs) of GFCM shall adopt fisheries management measures or national management plans in the GFCM-GSAs 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 (hereafter "Strait of Sicily") as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2
2. CPCs will actively cooperate with a view to establish the necessary requirements as soon as possible so as to be in position to adopt a management plan at the level of the GFCM, which should therefore draw on the experience of the then existing national management plans.

**PART II**

**Technical Conservation Measures**

3. The establishment of minimum conservation size and appropriate spatial restrictions are of high relevance for the conservation of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily.
4. As from the entering into force of this recommendation, deep-water rose shrimp, hake, red mullet, common pandora and red sea bream smaller than the minimum conservation reference size in total length or carapace length (CL) for crustaceans as reported below and measured to the lowest centimetre, shall not be caught, retained on board, transhipped, transferred, stored, sold, displayed or offered for sale:

Deep-water rose shrimp ( <i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i> )	20 mm
Hake ( <i>Merluccius merluccius</i> )	20 cm
Red mullet ( <i>Mullus barbatus</i> )	11 cm
Common Pandora ( <i>Pagellus erythrinus</i> )	15 cm
Red sea bream ( <i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i> )	33 cm
Norway Lobster ( <i>Nephrops norvegicus</i> )	20 mm CL

5. CPCs shall communicate by 31/03/2015 to the GFCM secretariat the spatial restrictions in the waters under their jurisdiction which they will apply with a view to protect spawning and nursery areas for deep water rose shrimp and associated species.

### **PART III**

#### **Fleet management measures**

6. CPCs shall maintain an updated register of vessels authorised to operate in the Strait of Sicily targeting demersal stocks.
7. CPCs shall communicate to GFCM Secretariat not later than 30 November of each year the list of vessels which have used bottom trawls to fish demersal stocks in the areas referred to in paragraph 1 in the past year.

### **PART IV**

#### **National Management Plans**

8. CPCs shall ensure that the measures outlined in Parts II and III are integrated in their national management.
9. CPCs shall notify to the GFCM by 31 January 2015 the management measures or management plans adopted at national level.

### **PART V**

#### **Assessment by the SAC**

10. In the framework of the stock assessment of 2016, the SAC shall evaluate the effectiveness of the management measures of this recommendation for the state of the stocks and of any measures applied under national management frameworks.

11. The Compliance Committee shall evaluate the level of implementation of the adopted management measures of this recommendation and provide GFCM with an opinion on their implementation for further consideration.
12. In conducting its evaluation the SAC will take into account the assessment of the Compliance Committee on the implementation of this recommendation.
13. The SAC will continue to work after the stock assessment referred to in paragraph 10 to provide GFCM with advice on the measures to be developed in view of establishing, at GFCM level, a multiannual management plan for demersal species in the Strait of Sicily, based on the national measures adopted by the CPCs. This will be done taking into account the opinion expressed by the Compliance committee referred to in para 11. ....