



**GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR  
THE MEDITERRANEAN**

**COMMISSION GÉNÉRALE DES PÊCHES  
POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE**



**MedSuit First Regional Workshop on indicators and targets to ensure GES  
of exploited marine living populations in the GFCM area**

**FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy, 6–7 November 2014**

**BACKGROUND NOTE**

**Background**

In the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development agreed upon in Johannesburg in 2002<sup>1</sup>, provision was made to “establish by 2004 a regular process under the United Nations for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, building on existing regional assessments” (the so-called “Regular Process”). Pursuant to Resolution 60/30 of November 2005, the United Nations General Assembly launched the start-up phase of the Regular Process called the “Assessment of Assessments”, which included the findings of an ad hoc group of experts. The regional summaries presented in these findings addressed in particular the situation of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. In this report, the contribution made by the GFCM in connection with stocks of living marine resources exploited in these seas was underlined within the broader analysis of existing institutional arrangements for organizing a global assessment of the state of the marine environment. Furthermore, it was noted that the GFCM was in the process of incorporating ecosystem objectives into the management of sustainable marine fisheries, including through the use of indicators and targets, with a view to determining the state of the stocks and implementing monitoring programmes.

Following the decision of the UN General Assembly to entrust the oversight and guidance of the Regular Process to an Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, relevant international organizations were encouraged to provide scientific advice for decisions at the global level on the world’s oceans and to propose a framework for national and regional assessments and management decisions. A first World Ocean Assessment is expected to be completed by the end of 2014, with subsequent assessments generated on a five-year cycle. This undertaking has been designed to progressively encompass all inputs that become available at the regional level.

Along with the work currently carried out by the GFCM for the preservation of living marine resources in its area of application, several organizations and institutions have already begun assessment initiatives of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Worth particular mention are the United Nations Environment Programme Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP / MAP), the Black Sea Commission and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). In 2008, the European Union adopted the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, which was particularly instrumental in (i) carrying out an initial assessment of the current environmental status of EU

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD\\_POI\\_PD/English/WSSD\\_PlanImpl.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/WSSD_PlanImpl.pdf)

Members' marine waters and the environmental impact and socio-economic analysis of human activities in these waters, (ii) determining what GES means for EU Members' marine waters, (iii) establishing environmental targets and associated indicators to achieve GES, and (iv) establishing a monitoring programme for the ongoing assessment and the regular update of targets. In order to improve coordination both among EU Members, as well as with non-EU Members in the relevant regions and subregions, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive promotes the use of existing institutional cooperation structures for the purpose of facilitating assessments and monitoring programmes at the regional level.

In light of the work currently carried out through its Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) on the assessment and monitoring of the status of exploited marine populations, and considering relevant initiatives steered by other international organizations (in particular, those which entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the GFCM such as UNEP / MAP, Black Sea Commission and ICES), the GFCM launched in 2013 a project sponsored and funded by the Italian Ministry of the Environment. This project, which is referred to as "MedSuit" and is implemented by the GFCM through its Framework Programme (FWP), is designed to be a supportive tool for the sustainable use of exploited marine living resources in the GFCM area through a synergic implementation of relevant frameworks (i.e. the Ecosystem Approach Process, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, etc.). During its first phase, "MedSuit" focused on the integration of the assessments of exploited living marine resources in the GFCM area, which were carried out by the SAC on the basis of information available and assessments developed in other institutional contexts. Within this framework, a Regional Workshop is scheduled on 6–7 November 2014 (FAO HQ, Rome, Italy) to further regional and inter-institutional cooperation and coordination within the GFCM area.

### **Main objectives of the Regional Workshop**

- To review existing information on the status of exploited living marine populations in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea
- To propose common indicators to ensure GES at the regional level
- To identify elements for joint monitoring programmes in the GFCM area, including in selected GFCM subregions (Adriatic Sea, Strait of Sicily, etc.)
- To make recommendations that could contribute to the ongoing work of the GFCM SAC in relation to the assessment and management of exploited marine populations.

### **Methodology**

The Regional Workshop is intended to be **both informative and participative**. Sessions will be balanced between discussions on the ongoing developments at the international and regional level and the presentation of national experiences/lessons learnt. Prior to the event, participants will be invited to provide information related to the topics to be discussed. This information should be sent to the GFCM Secretariat and contributors will be invited to deliver a short presentation on the information sent.

### **Participants**

The Regional Workshop is open to:

- representatives from national or regional administrations with expertise in fisheries and environment;
- invited experts from research institutions in the GFCM area whose technical expertise is considered of benefit for the Regional Workshop;
- relevant stakeholders, including officers from the FAO;
- partner organizations which have entered into a MoU with the GFCM;
- international organizations and projects;
- non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations with demonstrated expertise and interest in the field.

## Languages

The working languages of the workshop will be English and French. Interpretation facilities will be provided for English, French and Italian. All technical documents will be in English, some of which will also be made available in French.

## Available documents

- *GFCM Framework Programme*
- *MedSuit Technical Report*
- *Proposal on the definition of GES and associated indicators and targets for commercially exploited fish and shellfish populations presented to the 16<sup>th</sup> session of SAC*
- *Report of the 16<sup>th</sup> session of SAC*

## Date and place

6–7 November 2014  
FAO HQ,  
Malaysia Room  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla,  
00153 Rome, Italy

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