



<b>GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN</b>
<b>Twenty-third Session</b>
<b>Rome, Italy, 7-10 July 1998</b>
<b>Programme of Work and Budget for 1998-1999</b>

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At this special stage of the restructuring process of the Commission, it is not an easy task to plan the Programme of Work and Budget for the next intersessional period.

2. The Twenty-second Session of the General Fisheries Council<sup>1</sup> for the Mediterranean noted that the scale of contributions by the FAO Regular Programme cannot be expected to be adequate to future, and agreed on the principle of an autonomous budget. Neither the amount of such a budget nor the scale of national contributions were agreed upon. However, this is a priority for the present session.

3. In fact, the Twenty-second Session of GFCM noted that, although the principle of an autonomous budget had been agreed upon, it was necessary to have a transitional period during which the autonomous budget scenario might not be fully operational. The Council<sup>2</sup> agreed in principle that the following meetings be convened in 1998 (paragraph 30 of the report):

- The Twenty-third Session of GFCM (to be financed by FAO Regular Programme).
- The First Session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) (EC indicated its willingness to consider the possibility of financing this session).
- The Second Session of the Committee on Aquaculture if extra-budgetary funds could be made available.

- The Second Session of the Working Party on Fisheries Economics and Statistics. This Working Party met from 2 to 5 March 1998 at FAO Headquarters. The Session was financed by the Spanish Government.
- Meeting on tuna research in the western region of the Mediterranean Sea (Salambô, Tunisia, May 1998).

## **II. PROPOSED MEETINGS**

4. It is recalled that at its Twenty-second Session, the Council decided to hold its main Session every year. The Council also agreed that SAC should meet one month before the annual meeting of the Council and submit its report.

5. The Second Session of the Working Party on Fisheries Economics and Statistics suggested holding a meeting of a group of experts to review the STATLANT 37B scheme and make suggestions aimed either at cancelling or improving this scheme. At the meeting, the representative of EUROSTAT also proposed to organize a joint meeting of GFCM/EUROSTAT to promote statistical systems in the GFCM area. The date of the meeting could be decided at the First Session of SAC.

6. View of the above and subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources, the following meetings<sup>2</sup> are proposed:

### **(i) Statutory Meetings**

- Twenty-fourth Session of the Commission (June/July 1999)
- First Session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (May/June 1999)
- Second Session of the Committee on Aquaculture (December 1998)
- GFCM/ICCAT Joint Working Group on Large Pelagic Species (November 1999)

### **(ii) Other Meetings**

- Third session of the Working Group on Fisheries Economics and Statistics (March 1999)
- Group of Experts to review STATLANT 37B reporting scheme
- Group of Experts GFCM/EUROSTAT joint meeting

## **III. ACTIVITIES RELATING TO AQUACULTURE**

7. The programme of work relating to aquaculture includes regular meetings of the Committee on Aquaculture as stated above, the intersessional work of the GFCM aquaculture networks (SIPAM, TECAM, SELAM, and EAM) and *ad hoc* activities as decided by the Commission.

8. It is envisaged holding the next session of the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture in the last quarter of 1998 or early 1999<sup>2</sup>. Meetings of the Coordinating Committees of SIPAM, TECAM, SELAM, and EAM) should be organized during the next biennium by the partner organizations. The frequency of the meetings would be twice a year and their purposes to review the progress of the activities of the networks and to prepare programmes of work for consideration by the Committee on Aquaculture. However, for SIPAM, it should be mentioned that the network is directly supervised by the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture. The GFCM Secretariat will be represented at the Coordinating Committees of the other three networks, TECAM, SELAM and EAM.

9. Intersessional activities for TECAM and SELAM were prioritized at the last Coordinating Committee , Zaragoza, Spain, 9-10 June 1997. The following have been considered in TECAM:

- four workshops, on: utilization of aquaculture feeds, on aquaculture feed manufacturing practices, already implemented in March 1998, on the programme of work for pathology, and one on aquaculture health legislation and quarantine aspects;
- five seminars, on: nutrition in aquaculture and environmental impact; a second seminar on finfish species diversification to assess progress in the on-going research programmes; a seminar on aquaculture production techniques in closed systems; a seminar on quality aspects related to Mediterranean aquaculture, jointly held with SELAM as the programme will include subjects such as larval quality monitoring, production quality controls, HACCP, ecolabelling, implications of risks and insurance quality cost assessment, sanitary controls, etc.; and a seminar on mollusc production in the Mediterranean;
- two surveys on: experts, capabilities and research projects in aquatic health management, and another one on the industry needs in terms of work on genetics;
- two courses on: on off-shore cage culture, already implemented in 1997, and a course on hatchery production techniques for finfish species, already implemented in February 1998;
- a symposium on aquaculture and genetics in the Mediterranean, possibly in cooperation with the European Aquaculture Society and the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers;
- in addition the TECAM network will work on a newsletter on fish nutrition, integrated first with the FAO Aquaculture Newsletter and in the future with the SIPAM; already started with Issue No. 17 of the FAN; will organize short visits of specialized personnel on aquatic health management to reference laboratories; and will prepare a new proposal on concerted action on biology of reproduction for new finfish species, to be re-submitted to the INCO programme of the EC.

10. The SELAM network would organize:

- three workshops on: aquaculture planning in the Mediterranean already carried out in March 1998; on integration of aquaculture production systems, in order to promote relevant research programmes at regional level; and on cost analysis of production models considering different species and techniques;
- working group meetings for the design of a database on marketing in cooperation with SIPAM and the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers, one of which was already carried out in February 1998;
- a comparative analysis of the legal framework affecting aquaculture development in the Mediterranean.

11. However, the EC DG-I left out aquaculture from the topics for which funding is provided to CIHEAM, which limits CIHEAM's possibilities to support the programme as planned at the Coordinating Committee. Discussions were ongoing at the time of preparation of this paper within CIHEAM to ascertain the internal level of funding which could be made available.

12. No programme has been prepared for the EAM network which was to be coordinated by the UNEP/MAP PAP/RAC centre in Split, Croatia. In 1996 and 1997 this network was not active due to the lack of financial resources. In October 1997 PAP/RAC informed the GFCM Secretariat that no budget could be allocated for aquaculture activities also for 1998-99. After initial discussions to find a replacement for MAP PAP/RAC, and in consultation with CIHEAM, it was considered that as an interim solution environmental issues associated with planning of aquaculture development or to other specialized group of TECAM (such as nutrition, diseases, genetics or planning and legislation), could be incorporated in the programme of work of TECAM and SELAM.

13. For the SIPAM network, the activities planned for the biennium include: one annual meeting of National Coordinators, which could be combined with the SIPAM Steering Committee; expansion to the rest of the GFCM member countries; consolidation and improvement of the system and the Windows software; and visits of the Regional Coordinator to selected countries to assist in the implementation of the programme.

14. A major *ad hoc* activity would be a consultation on the implementation of Article 9 (Aquaculture Development) of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The entire cost of the workshop including the field preparation/studies and the publication of the proceedings are to be covered by a contribution of Italian Lire 584.8 million by the Italian Government. It is expected that the workshop will take place before the end of 1998, and before the Second Session of the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture.

#### **IV. ACTIVITIES RELATING TO RESOURCES EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT**

15. The activities described in the document GFCM/XXII/97/5 of the Twenty-second Session of the GFCM (October 1997) are still relevant. They cover the following:

##### **Technical studies**

- Preparation and publication of Studies and Reviews,
- Assistance to the maintenance and updating of databases and analysis of catch trends, economic analysis of fishing fleet capacity, etc., as required by meetings of GFCM and subsidiary bodies,
- Research on the biology and fisheries for tunas and other similar species exploited in the Western Mediterranean and Straits of Gibraltar, financed and implemented by the FAO/COPEMED project.

#### **V. ACTIVITIES RELATED TO FISHERIES STATISTICS**

16. Two main elements of specific GFCM activities are: (i) maintenance of new technical standards using common data formats (ii) establishing a statistical foundation for management based on direct effort control.

##### **Maintenance of new technical standards with common formats**

17. Under the element "Maintenance of new technical standardizing with common formats", there are four main activities:

- Maintenance of the STATLANT 37A reporting system and database (fish production in volume from capture fisheries and aquaculture by sub-area and division);
- Upgrading of STATLANT 37B recording system and database (fish production in volume and effort by fishing method, type and size category, species, sub-area and month) or its abolition;
- Coordination of statistical activities and compatibility of systems established through national and regional projects; and
- Development of information and communication packages, including the publication of statistics, and their distribution through PC diskettes and the Internet.

##### **Statistical foundation for management based on direct effort control**

18. With regards to "Statistical foundation for management based on direct effort control" three major activities will be undertaken:

- Update and maintain a list of vessels above 15 m LOA operating in the GFCM area of competence (there, progress has been shown by non-response of several member countries);
- Set-up a new fishery database (i.e. a revised fishing fleet database), as recommended by the Twenty-first Session of the Commission (Resolution 95/4).
- Set-up a pilot regional monitoring system on socio-economic indicators.

## **VI. COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### ***Cooperation with EC***

19. The strengthening of cooperation between GFCM and the EC has always been of concern to the Secretariat. Despite the Community not yet being a member of the Commission, its contribution to GFCM activities has always been substantial, both at the meetings organized by GFCM and in financing the joint GFCM/ICCAT *ad hoc* Working Groups on Large Pelagic Species. Until EC becomes a member of GFCM, it is expected that the Community will continue to contribute to the work of the Commission

### ***Cooperation with ICCAT***

20. A meeting of the *ad hoc* GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagic Species will be organized. It is expected that a training course on new techniques of stock assessment and in the management of modelling procedures will be organized for eight experts from southern and eastern Mediterranean countries,.

### ***Cooperation with CIHEAM***

21. Cooperation with CIHEAM will be strengthened. A Letter of Agreement formalized this cooperation. This Letter of Agreement follows the model of similar letters signed between CIHEAM and FAO.

## **VII. BUDGET**

22. The Twenty-second Session of GFCM requested the Secretariat (see para. 31 of the report) to communicate to member countries an updated document on FAO's contribution to the GFCM budget for 1998, based on the actual availability of funds. Such a document was sent in mid January 1998. No reaction has yet been received from member countries. The total budget allocated to the GFCM meetings for the biennium 1998/99 is attached in Appendix 1.

## **VIII. SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**

23. The Commission is invited to review the proposed Programme of Work and Budget for the intersessional period and make recommendations/decisions as it deems appropriate.

24. The Commission is also invited to consider the fact that the autonomous budget may not enter an operational phase before the end of 1999, and should therefore advise on the possibility of funding those activities for which FAO has not been asked to make budgetary allocations.

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The change of Council into Commission was adopted during the 22nd Session of the Council, therefore at that session GFCM was still Council and not Commission.

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It should be noted however that there is no budget allocation for all these meetings. The FAO budget would cover however the Secretariat and the technical support.