

Rome, 3 November 2022

Consultation on the main issues related to the sustainable development of the SSF sector, socio-economic indicators in relation to SSF and the RPOA-SSF

The consultation process managed by the Mediterranean Advisory Council (MEDAC) in Rome on 30 June 2022, in collaboration with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) within the framework of the SSF Forum and contributing to the celebration of the International Year for Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 (IYAFA), acknowledged the social, environmental and cultural role of small-scale fisheries in European coastal communities and commended the MEDAC's work on this topic, recognizing that, since the beginning of its operations, the organization has always paid attention to the characteristics and specificities of small-scale fisheries (SSF) in the Mediterranean basin.

The consultation process involved the MEDAC members and representatives of the Maghreb Platform for Small-Scale Fisheries (PMPA) and the Tunisian Association for the Development of Artisanal Fishing (ATDEPA), hereafter called **"the group"**.

Referring to SSF, the MEDAC already agreed on the considerations listed below (Ref. 312/2019):

The MEDAC applies the "open door" policy, as reported in the Statute's Art. 3.1: "European and national organizations representing the fisheries sector and any other stakeholder groups involved with the Common Fisheries Policy in the zone of interest may request to become members of the MEDAC." Moreover, in the Statute this concept is reiterated in Art. 4.3: "The 60–40 proportions shall be fully maintained for the Executive Committee, while for the General Assembly they are to be considered the goal to be achieved, while not excluding any organization that wishes to apply for MEDAC membership."

Furthermore, Art. 5.7 of the MEDAC Statute states that "The Executive Committee is made up of 25 members, maintaining the proportions of 60 percent and 40 percent" and "After consultation with the EC, the General Assembly (GA) may decide, at the Chairman's proposal, to appoint an Executive Committee of up to 30 members to ensure adequate representation of small-scale fisheries." The General Assembly didn't decide to appoint an Executive Committee of up to 30 members since the associations participating in the Executive Committee already assured a clear prevalence of SSF representation.

The balanced and broad representation of all stakeholders is ensured by the deliberations of the organization bodies, according to the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU)2015/242. Moreover, as reported by the MEDAC members who contributed to the GFCM High Level Conference on SSF (Malta, September 2018), all the European Union Mediterranean SSF organizations are represented by MEDAC members from, respectively, Spain (Cofradías de Pescadores), Croatia (Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts), France (CNPMEM and CRPMEMs PACA, Occitanie and Corse), Malta (Għaqda Koperattiva tas-Sajd), Cyprus (Pancyriot Association of Professional Fisherman) and Italy (Italian cooperatives and shipowners' organizations). The Slovenian organization is the only one from Slovenia in the MEDAC, and it has been confirmed by its Member States. As for Greece, up to now, no organization widely represents SSF in the country. Therefore, in the General Assembly and in the Executive Committee, SSF is widely represented.

As for the future measures presented by the GFCM Secretariat's representative during the meeting held in Rome on 30 June 2022 in the context of the IYAFA/SSF forum, the group agreed on the following opinions related to the SSF regional instruments, especially considering future measures for SSF in the Mediterranean Sea:

- **DATA COLLECTION: Socioeconomic data covering SSF characteristics**
 - trend of total number of vessels

- trend of active vessels per Mediterranean subregion
- trend of active vessels per country
- percentage of total vessels that are inactive per country (%)
- average age of vessels (years)
- trend of fishing days in the Mediterranean Sea (days)
- trend of fishing days per country
- trend of catches per unit effort (kg)
- trend of landings value in the Mediterranean Sea (€)
- landings value per country
- employee costs
- trend of the crew and FTE (full time equivalent) in the Mediterranean Sea (number of people)
- trend of number of FTE
- trend of the crew per country

- **SSF AND RF INTERACTIONS**

The group agreed on the following list of main species targeted by recreational fisheries (RF) activities:

Main species targeted by modality in EU Mediterranean waters		
Coast	Boat	Spearfishing
<i>Argyrosomus regius</i>	<i>Argyrosomus regius</i>	<i>Argyrosomus regius</i>
<i>Belone belone</i>	<i>Auxis thazard</i>	<i>Balistes capriscus</i>
<i>Conger conger</i>	<i>Balistes capriscus</i>	<i>Conger conger</i>
<i>Coriphaena hippurus</i>	<i>Belone belone</i>	<i>Dentex dentex</i>
<i>Dentex dentex</i>	<i>Conger conger</i>	<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>
<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	<i>Coriphaena hippurus</i>	<i>Diplodus spp</i>
<i>Diplodus spp</i>	<i>Dentex dentex</i>	<i>Diplodus cervinus</i>
<i>Epinephelus aeneus</i>	<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	<i>Diplodus puntazzo</i>
<i>Epinephelus costae</i>	<i>Diplodus spp</i>	<i>Diplodus sargus</i>
<i>Euthynnus alletteratus</i>	<i>Epinephelus aeneus</i>	<i>Epinephelus aeneus</i>
<i>Labrus merula</i>	<i>Epinephelus costae</i>	<i>Epinephelus costae</i>
<i>Labrus viridis</i>	<i>Epinephelus marginatus</i>	<i>Epinephelus marginatus</i>
<i>Lichia ama</i>	<i>Euthynnus alletteratus</i>	<i>Labrus merula</i>
<i>Lithognathus mormyrus</i>	<i>Labrus merula</i>	<i>Labrus viridis</i>
<i>Loligo vulgaris</i>	<i>Labrus viridis</i>	<i>Lichia ama</i>
<i>Mugilidae spp</i>	<i>Lichia ama</i>	<i>Lithognathus mormyrus</i>
<i>Mullus surmuletus</i>	<i>Lithognathus mormyrus</i>	<i>Loligo vulgaris</i>
<i>Oblada melanura</i>	<i>Loligo vulgaris</i>	<i>Lophius piscatorius</i>
<i>Octopus vulgaris</i>	<i>Lophius piscatorius</i>	<i>Mugilidae sp</i>
<i>Pagrus auriga</i>	<i>Mugilidae sp</i>	<i>Mullus surmuletus</i>
<i>Phycis phycis</i>	<i>Mullus surmuletus</i>	<i>Muraena helena</i>
<i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>	<i>Mycteroperca rubra</i>	<i>Mycteroperca rubra</i>
<i>Psetta maxima</i>	<i>Naucrates ductor</i>	<i>Octopus vulgaris</i>
<i>Sarda sarda</i>	<i>Oblada melanura</i>	<i>Pagrus auriga</i>
<i>Sarpa salpa</i>	<i>Octopus vulgaris</i>	<i>Phycis phycis</i>
<i>Sciaena umbra</i>	<i>Pagellus acarne</i>	<i>Plectorhinchus mediterraneus</i>
<i>Scomber spp</i>	<i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>	<i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>
<i>Scorpaena porcus</i>	<i>Pagellus erythrinus</i>	<i>Sarda sarda</i>
<i>Seriola dumerili</i>	<i>Pagrus auriga</i>	<i>Sarpa salpa</i>
<i>Serranus scriba</i>	<i>Pagrus pagrus</i>	<i>Sciaena umbra</i>
<i>Sparus aurata</i>	<i>Phycis phycis</i>	<i>Scorpaena porcus</i>
<i>Sphyaena sphyaena</i>	<i>Plectorhinchus mediterraneus</i>	<i>Scorpaena scrofa</i>
<i>Sphyaena viridiensis</i>	<i>Polyprion americanus</i>	<i>Sepia officinalis</i>
<i>Symphodus tinca</i>	<i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>	<i>Seriola dumerili</i>
<i>Todarodes sagittatus</i>	<i>Sarda sarda</i>	<i>Serranus scriba</i>
<i>Trachinotus ovatus</i>	<i>Sarpa salpa</i>	<i>Sparisoma cretense</i>
<i>Trachurus spp</i>	<i>Sciaena umbra</i>	<i>Sparus aurata</i>
<i>Umbrina cirrosa</i>	<i>Scomber spp</i>	
	<i>Scorpaena porcus</i>	
	<i>Scorpaena scrofa</i>	
	<i>Sepia officinalis</i>	
	<i>Seriola dumerili</i>	

	<i>Serranus scriba</i> <i>Sparisoma cretense</i> <i>Sparus aurata</i> <i>Sphyraena sphyraena</i> <i>Sphyraena viridiensis</i> <i>Spondylosoma cantharus</i> <i>Symphodus tinca</i> <i>Tetrapturus belone</i>	<i>Sphyraena viridiensis</i> <i>Spondylosoma cantharus</i> <i>Symphodus tinca</i>
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Considering the need to focus on some of the above-listed species, the group agreed on identifying the following list of species¹ that, according to the stakeholders' opinion, in addition to being of recreational fishing interest, might be endangered:

- *Sparus aurata*
- *Dicentrarchus labrax*
- *Dentex dentex*
- *Epinephelus marginatus*
- *Sciaena umbra*
- *Umbrina cirrosa*

For these species, the group agreed and recommended:

- stock assessments in order to reach an agreement on indications related to management options; and
- inclusion within the framework of Mediterranean Multiannual plans, taking into account the ecology of each species.

Moreover, about possible future GFCM measures related to SSF–RF interactions, considering the main issues related to these interactions, the group agreed on the following opinions:

- recreational fishing means non-commercial fishing exploiting marine biological resources for recreation, tourism or sport, and self consumption²;
- recreational fishing gear and methods include lines, spears, nets, traps, pots, and set lines;
- conservation measures³;
- prohibitions – it shall be prohibited to engage in recreational fishing (all modalities) without a valid fishing license or registration;
- gear and practices allowed in recreational fisheries (the impacts of different types of gear and practices should be assessed) include:
 - rods, hand lines and trolling lines, utilized without electromechanical aids⁴ exceeding a power limit of 800 W⁵;
 - CPCs, on the basis of stock assessment and impact assessment⁶, may limit the amount of gear and accessories (e.g. number of longlines and hooks, number of traps and pots,

¹ PEPMA highlights that the list cannot be exhaustive and binding but that an adaptive management which considers the variety of Mediterranean environments, fishing methods, target species and management priorities has to be implemented. PEPMA suggests as initial list of priority species: *Epinephelus spp*, *Diplodus sargus*, *Dentex dentex*, *Diplodus vulgaris*, *Pagellus erythrinus* and *Dicentrarchus labrax*.

² FACOPE underlines that “self-consumption” should not be included in the concept of recreational fishing. Instead, according to EAA and IFUSA, the concept of self-consumption (or personal consumption) is very relevant and appropriate to appear in the definition of recreational fishing, and this is reflected in the Working Group on Recreational Fisheries Surveys (WGRF) of ICES in its definition of 2013 and in “EIFAC code of practice for recreational fisheries” (2007): www.fao.org/3/i0363e/i0363e.pdf

³ FACOPE suggests to add a paragraph 9 on the “species authorized for recreational fishing: CPCs may establish limitations on the list of species, as well as number of specimens or the weight of the catches.”

⁴ CIPS and FIPSAS do not agree with the limitation of this tool because no scientific indication of the impact of the electromechanical aids is provided and the socio-economic value of this recreational fishing activity is not taken into account. EAA agrees and adds that some disabled people would lose their hobby if all electromechanical help should be forbidden.

⁵ WWF suggests deleting “exceeding a power limit of 800W”

number of lures)⁷ authorized per fisher, and may define further specific regulations for passive⁸ gears⁹.

- CPCs, on the basis of the most recent scientific advice, may adopt additional measures to regulate recreational fisheries, such as landing limits and spatial and temporal closures (e.g. on mapped spawning areas, spawning periods, spawning and juvenile aggregations).

- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE BLACK SEA (RPOA-SSF)**

The group would like to take the opportunity to draw attention to the following recommendations in no particular order:

- Value chain: Encourage the first processing of landings to be performed by either the fishers themselves, their cooperatives or their producer organizations, in order to extend the shelf life of products.
- Capacity building: Encourage professional training opportunities for fishers on land and at sea, aiming to facilitate the generational turnover. Protect and preserve the traditional and cultural aspects of SSF.
- Decent work: Promote decent work and the improvement of working conditions, as well as social protection for all small-scale fisheries workers.
- Role of women: Women should have equal opportunities and rights in the sector and should be recognized for their role throughout the entire value chain.
- Climate and environment: Assist and support small-scale fisheries communities affected by climate change or by natural and human-induced disasters. In particular, take into account and manage the consequences of marine litter with the direct involvement of fishers.

⁶ CIPS and FIPSAS deleted “on the basis of stock assessment and impact assessment”. Reference to stock assessment and impact assessment would appear too vague since these are the criteria for decisions on a specific stock rather than for a specific gear. Therefore, CIPS and FIPSAS propose a slightly revised formulation of paragraph 7 to make it more consistent, while leaving the possibility for CPCs to introduce more detailed regulations for gears and accessories where appropriate.

⁷ CIPS and FIPSAS suggest to delete the content in brackets.

⁸ CIPS and FIPSAS don’t agree on “passive” and suggest “certain”.

⁹ WWF deleted : « (e.g. number of longlines and hooks for each, number of traps and pots, lures)”and “and may defined further specific regulation for passive gears”.