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**FISH TRADE AMONG MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES:
INTRAREGIONAL TRADE AND IMPORT-EXPORT
WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION**

by

Loretta Malvarosa and Cassandra De Young

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

The FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 978 (Malvarosa, 2002), which deals with fish trade relationships involving the European Union (EU) and North African Mediterranean countries, was published in 2002 and was based on data for the 1990s. Since then, there have been a number of changes that merit an update of this circular.

An initial and informal update was presented at the sixteenth annual conference of the European Association of Fisheries Economists (EAFE) held at FAO headquarters (Rome, 5–7 April 2004) and at the seventh meeting of the Sub-Committee on Economic and Social Sciences (SCESS) also held in Rome (11–14 September 2006) (Malvarosa, 2004). This represented a preliminary and very general update up to 2003 of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 978. As stated in the report of the seventh SCESS meeting, “The work developed by Ms Malvarosa was considered particularly useful by the participants, who stressed the need to update this work, particularly in relation to changes in legislation and international status of some countries during the process of EU accession.”

Consequently, the SCESS suggested that member countries facilitate the collection of relevant data on import and export flows to and from Mediterranean and EU countries, among other trade data, in order to promote analyses of market situations affecting fisheries management. Furthermore, the SCESS suggested an update of FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 978 by expanding the scope of the study to include all Mediterranean countries, including the Balkans, and to reflect the changes within the legal and political situations of the countries in the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) that have occurred since 2001.

These recommendations were endorsed by the GFCM in its ninth session, held in Rome, (24–27 October 2006). GFCM is certainly aware of the need for further research into the role that the market forces have on fisheries management and vice versa, and in particular the role of demand and trade as an important factor in the unsustainability of fisheries.

The aim of the present document is therefore to update FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 978 by taking into account the legal and political changes that have occurred in GFCM countries since 2001.

The document was prepared by Loretta Malvarosa from the Istituto di Ricerche Economiche per la Pesca e l'Acquacoltura (IREPA) and Cassandra De Young, Fishery Planning Analyst, Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department. David Dunn was responsible for editing this report.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to analyse the trade in fish and fishery products in the Mediterranean basin. Trade plays a key role in the economy of a country. With reference to the fisheries sector, it appears that the influence of market forces on the management of fisheries (and vice versa) is increasing.

After an overview of recent trends in fishery production (capture fishery and aquaculture), the study focuses on the exchange of fishery products, based on data from United Nations (UN)-Comtrade and FAO (for international trade) and Eurostat data (for European Union [EU] trade). The analysis considers both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of trade. The core of the study comprises an analysis of the fish trade between the two sides of the Mediterranean basin, the EU and the non-EU countries. At the European level, the trade in fish products between the northern and the southern Mediterranean is of particular importance when considering recent trends in production and consumption, as well as the legal framework covering both the production and trade sides of the fishery sector. To cope with growing domestic demand (as a result of high and growing standards of living, leading to increased consumption of fish products) and a decrease in fish production (caused by a number of restrictions set by the Common Fisheries Policy [CFP] on catch and effort), EU imports of fish products from the rest of the world are on a constant rise. In these circumstances, neighbouring Mediterranean countries can play a key role, especially in the light of recent liberalization processes, for example, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (or Barcelona Process) and the Stabilization and Association Process in the western Balkans.

The cross-sectoral analysis of fishery production and trade provides a number of conclusions and lessons for the future of fishery management. It is recommended that policy-makers take into account the demand and trade in fish products with regard to the sustainability of marine resources and vice versa.

CONTENTS

	Page
Preparation of this document.....	iii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Abbreviations and acronyms	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON FISH TRADE LIBERALIZATION WITHIN THE WTO FRAMEWORK.....	3
1.1 The Euro-Mediterranean partnership	4
1.2 The Stabilization and Association Process in the Western Balkans	7
1.3 Recent developments in agreements concerning Mediterranean countries	9
1.4 The tariff scheme governing the exchange of fish products between Mediterranean countries and the EU	10
2. OVERVIEW OF MEDITERRANEAN FISHERY PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION	12
3. TRADE FLOWS OF FISHERY PRODUCTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN.....	18
3.1 Fish trade of Mediterranean countries as part of world trade.....	18
3.2 Intra-Mediterranean fish trade.....	19
3.3 Fish trade between Mediterranean countries and the EU	20
4. CONCLUSIONS	39
REFERENCES.....	42
 APPENDIXES	
Appendix A – Common tariff scheme for fishery products entered into force on 1 January 2004 (extracted from the EC Reg, 1789/2003).....	44
Appendix B – Provisions set for fishery products by the EC Reg, 2007/2009 introducing exceptional trade measures for countries and territories participating in or linked to the European Union's Stabilization and Association Process	59
Appendix C – Annex III of the Interim agreement (SAA) with Albania providing some exceptions to the dismantling of tariff barriers on imports into the European Community of fish and fish products originating in Albania.....	61
Appendix D.1 – Annex V/a of the SAA with Croatia providing some exceptions to the dismantling of tariff barriers on imports into the European Community of fish and fish products originating in Croatia	63
Appendix D.2 – Annex V/b of the SAA with Croatia providing some exceptions to the dismantling of tariff barriers on imports into Croatia of fish and fish products originating in the European Community	65
Appendix E.1 – Annex IV of the SAA with Montenegro providing some exceptions to the dismantling of tariff barriers on imports into the European Community of fish and fish products originating in Montenegro.....	67
Appendix E.2 – Annex V/b of the SAA with Montenegro providing some exceptions to the dismantling of tariff barriers on imports into Montenegro of fish and fish products originating in the European Community.....	70
Appendix F – Protocol 2 of the EMAA with Morocco providing arrangements applying to imports into the Community of fishery products originating in Morocco	72

Appendix G – Protocol 2 of the EMAA with Tunisia providing arrangements applying to imports into the Community of fishery products originating in Tunisia.....	74
Appendix H.1 – Protocol 3 of the EMAA with Algeria providing arrangements applying to imports into the Community of fishery products originating in Algeria.....	75
Appendix H.2 – Protocol 4 of the EMAA with Algeria providing arrangements applying to imports into Algeria of fishery products originating in the Community.....	76
Appendix I – Codes and description of fish products as classified in the SITC Rev. 3 classification...	80
Appendix J.1 – Total imports of fish products in volume (tonnes) of EU-27 from the Mediterranean partners, 1995–2007.....	82
Appendix J.2 – Total imports of fish products in value (in thousand euros) of EU-25 from the Mediterranean partners, 1995–2007	83
Appendix J.3 – Total exports of fish products in volume (tonnes) of EU-25 to the Mediterranean partners, 1995–2007.....	84
Appendix J.4 – Total exports of fish products in value (in thousand euros) of EU-25 to the Mediterranean partners, 1995–2007	85
Appendix J.5 – Imports of fish products in volume (tonnes) of EU-27 from the Mediterranean partners by commodity groups, 1995–2007.....	86
Appendix J.6 – Imports of fish products in value (in thousand euros) of EU-27 from the Mediterranean partners by commodity groups, 1995–2007.....	88
Appendix J.7 – Exports of fish products in volume (tonnes) of EU-27 to the Mediterranean partners by commodity groups, 1995–2007	90
Appendix J.8 – Exports of fish products in value (in thousand euros) of EU-27 to the Mediterranean partners by commodity groups, 1995–2007.....	92

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Mediterranean countries aquaculture production by fishing area (production volume, 2007).....	15
Figure 2 – Mediterranean countries capture production by fishing area (production volume, 2007)....	16
Figure 3 – Role of non-EU Mediterranean countries in the trade of fish products of EU-25 with the rest of the world (exchange value, 2006).....	21
Figure 4 – Role of non-EU Mediterranean countries in the trade of EUMC fishery products with the rest of the world (exchange value, 2006).....	22
Figure 5 – Trend of imports of fishery products by EU-27 from Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, thousand tonnes, and value, mln €, 1995–2007).....	23
Figure 6 – Trend of exports of fish products from EU-27 to Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, thousand tonnes, and value, mln €, 1995–2007).....	24
Figure 7 – Role of the non-EU Mediterranean countries in the fishery products exchange with EU-27 countries (exchange volume, 1995, 2001 and 2007).....	24
Figure 8 - Role of the non-EU Mediterranean countries in the fishery products exchange with EUMC (exchange volume, average 1995–2007).....	25
Figure 9 – Trend of the index numbers (base = 1995) for imports of fishery products for some EU-27 partners.....	26
Figure 10 – Imports of fish products, by commodity, by EU-27 from Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, 1995–2007).....	30
Figure 11 – Imports of fish products, by commodity, by EUMC from Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, 1995–2007).....	31
Figure 12 – Exports of fish products, by commodity, by EU-27 to Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, 1995–2007).....	32
Figure 13 – Exports of fish and fishery products, by commodity, by EUMC to Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, 1995–2007).....	33
Figure 14 – Contribution of the main species groups on the total imports of fish and fishery products, by EU-27 from Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, 1995–2007).....	34
Figure 15 – Contribution of the main species groups on the total exports of fish and fishery products, by EU-27 to Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, 1995–2007).....	35

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 – Status of Euro-Mediterranean agreements, updated June 2009	6
Table 2 – Status of Stabilization and Association Agreements in the context of the SAP updated June 2009	9
Table 3 – GDP, Value added (agriculture and fishery) for the Mediterranean country groups in million euros, year 2000	12
Table 4 – Fishery production of Mediterranean countries by countries and country groups (production volume, tonnes, 2007).....	13
Table 5 – Evolution of the aquaculture production of Mediterranean countries by country groups and fishing area (production volume, tonnes, 1990, 2000 and 2007).....	15
Table 6 – Evolution of capture production of Mediterranean countries by country groups and fishing area (production volume, tonnes, 1990, 2000 and 2007).....	17
Table 7 – Fish per capita consumption of Mediterranean countries by country groups (consumption volume, kg/year, 1976–2002).....	17
Table 8 – Fish consumption forecasts for the Mediterranean basin based on (i) a growth and (ii) a stabilized scenario (consumption volume, thousand tonnes, 1999–2030).....	18
Table 9 – The role of the Mediterranean basin within the world trade of fishery products (volume, tonnes, 1990 and 2005).....	19
Table 10 – Intra-Mediterranean imports of fishery products, (exchange value, mln \$, 2006).....	20
Table 11 – Position of fishery products in the agro-food exchange: import–export of EU-25 from/to TMC in value	22

Table 12 – Share of EUMC and of other EU members stated in the fishery products exchange to and from CMC, PCMC and TMC (exchange volume, average 1995–1996 and 2006–2007).....	25
Table 13 – Standardized trade balance of fishery products exchange between Mediterranean countries and EUMC (exchange value, average 1995–1996 and 2006–2007).....	27
Table 14 – Imports of fish and fishery products among EU-27 country groups and the Mediterranean country groups by commodity (exchange volume, thousand tonnes, 2007).....	28
Table 15 – Exports of fish and fishery products among EU-27 country groups and the Mediterranean country groups by commodity (exchange volume, thousand tonnes, 2007).....	29
Table 16 – Imports of the main species by EU-27 from Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, thousand tonnes, 1995, 2001, 2007)	34
Table 17 – Exports of the main species by EU-27 to Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, thousand tonnes, 1995, 2001, 2007)	35
Table 18 – Top products and EU countries in the import–export of fishery products of non-EU Mediterranean countries (exchange volume, 2006).....	37

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
CMC	Candidate Mediterranean countries
DDA	Doha Development Agenda
EAFE	European Association of Fisheries Economists
EC	European Community
EMAA	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
EUMC	European Mediterranean countries
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross domestic product
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
IAMB	Istituto Agronomico Mediterraneo di Bari
INEA	Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria
ISMEA	Istituto di Servizi per il Mercato Agricolo Alimentare
MFN	Most favoured nation
NAMA	Non-agricultural market access
OEUC	Other European countries
PCMC	Potential candidate Mediterranean countries
RTA	Regional trade agreement
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement
SAC	Scientific and Advisory Committee
SAP	Stabilization and Association Process
SITC	Standard International Trade Classification
SCSS	Sub-Committee on Economic and Social Sciences
TMC	Third Mediterranean countries
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

