



COOPERATION FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Eastern Mediterranean countries have active fisheries that provide important sources of food and employment. However, the sustainability of fisheries production systems is affected by different threats, including the overfishing of main resources and environmental changes caused by pollution, habitat degradation, the introduction of alien species and the impact of climate change. The ability of countries to address these threats is hindered by the scarcity of information about the sector, limited human and financial resources and capacities, and different country priorities and institutional capacities. Moreover, the historically poor level of cooperation among Eastern Mediterranean countries has resulted in significant differences across nations in how fisheries are managed, hindering cooperation towards the management of shared marine resources. Support was therefore needed to strengthen national fisheries management capacities and to encourage cooperation in support of regional fisheries management initiatives established in the framework of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM). The EastMed project was designed to support the development of regionally consistent fisheries management among Eastern Mediterranean countries through the monitoring of commercial fisheries and the development of fishery research and management capacity. EastMed became operational in September 2009 with funds from the European Union (DG-MARE), the Government of Italy through the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies and the Government of Greece through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Rural Development and Food. The present report highlights the achievements obtained during the eighth year of financial contributions to the EastMed project.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The development objective of the project was to contribute to the sustainable management of marine fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean. The immediate aims were to improve the capacity of national fisheries departments to increase their scientific and technical information base for fisheries management, and to develop coordinated and participative fisheries management plans in the Eastern Mediterranean. These were achieved by the provision of training in data collection and analysis for the assessment of status of fisheries resources and the socio-economic conditions of fisheries. Pilot studies were also supported to mainstream the ecosystem approach to fisheries management. In addition, the project promoted regional scientific and technical cooperation by facilitating the participation of national experts in regional activities organized by the GFCM and other organizations. In order to strengthen international and regional cooperation, the project interacted closely with other FAO sub-regional projects (AdriaMed, CopeMed and MedSudMed), throughout its implementation.

KEY FACTS

Contribution

USD 527 927

Duration

October 2016 – January 2018

Resource Partner

The European Union (EU)

Beneficiaries

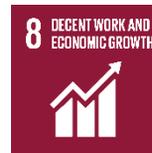
Fisheries departments of the countries bordering the Eastern Mediterranean

IMPACT

Through a continuous and demand-driven process of capacity development national fisheries experts and institutions could manage and process fisheries data, guaranteeing the sustainability of the project outcomes. The project also played a catalytic role in facilitating increased dialogue with fisheries stakeholders and civil society organizations, a strategy that enabled the views of all stakeholders to be heard at policy, normative and technical discussions. Finally, the project contributed to the creation and consolidation of a constantly growing cooperative network of national institutions, ensuring that the project's achievements would be sustainable in the long term.

ACTIVITIES (OCTOBER 2016 TO JANUARY 2018)

- Fisheries management plans based on the ecosystem approach developed for three countries (Egypt, Lebanon and Turkey).
- Two sub-regional training workshops organized in Egypt and Lebanon.
- Summer school in quantitative fisheries stock assessment (co-organized with the other FAO Mediterranean projects, GFCM and the EU-JRC). The summer school was attended by 34 experts, including ten from Eastern Mediterranean countries.
- Technical and financial support provided to fisheries data collection in Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine.
- Fisheries legal study conducted in Lebanon.
- Nine stock assessments carried out.
- Routine systems for the collection of catch and effort, biological and socio-economic indicators consolidated in Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine (Gaza).
- Three sub-regional technical meetings held for exchange of information among Eastern Mediterranean countries.
- 51 experts from Eastern Mediterranean countries supported to participate in regional activities.



Project Code

FAO: GCP/INT/271/EC
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Project Title

EastMed: Scientific and Institutional Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean

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