

FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting
Eleventh Session
Rome, Italy 13-14 and 18 May 2019
ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY GFCM DURING THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD (June 2017 – April 2019)
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1. Development of inventories of marine resources and of fisheries

In 2016, in collaboration with the FIRMS Secretariat, 36 stocks reports were updated with reporting year = 2015 or 2014.

Over the last five years, the GFCM has been increasingly working on an integrated platform encompassing data transmission procedures from CPCs, in line with the Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF¹) of the GFCM, including but not limited to stock assessment input data. Repositories dedicated to the submission of Stock Assessment Forms have also been lodged in the same context. The way the overall architecture works allows the use of R-based scripts facilitating a number of scientific and technical tasks, spanning data quality checks and support to the use of stock assessment models. In occasion of the GFCM FishForum 2018², the GFCM Secretariat liaised with ICES following the presentation of the ICES TAF and found interesting similarities between technical approaches and underlying technologies powering the two frameworks. In this connection, it was agreed that further consultations would be mutually beneficial to bolster respective advancements to achieve enhanced flexibility, transparency and reproducibility of scientific results.

2. Reporting on status/trends of marine resources and of fisheries

The status of GFCM priority species, and other species, is assessed yearly by the Working Group on the Assessment of Demersal Species (WGSAD) and Working Group on the

¹ <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/data/dcrf>

² <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/fishforum2018>

Assessment of Small Pelagic Species (WGSASP) for the Mediterranean Sea and by the Sub-regional Group on Stock Assessment for the Black Sea (SGSABS) for the Black Sea. Advice for Mediterranean species is reviewed by the Scientific Advisory Committee for fisheries (SAC) and for Black Sea species by the Working Group for the Black Sea (WGBS). Based on this, advice is produced annually by the Commission. Each validated assessment is summarized a Stock Assessment Form (SAF) containing all relevant information³ and detailed reports of the working groups are published online⁴. In addition, input data and scripts of validated stock assessments are available from the GFCM Secretariat upon request. Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) frameworks are being developed for selected fisheries covered multiannual management plans, namely Black Sea turbot, Adriatic anchovy and sardine and demersal fisheries for European hake and deep water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily. Reports of the Workshops on the Assessment of Management Measures (WKMSE) can be found on the GFCM website⁵. The 2018 edition of The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries (SoMFi 2018)⁶ was recently published, providing a comprehensive overview of regional and subregional trends in Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries.

3. Development/review of standards

The GFCM has recently developed the following methodologies supporting the implementation of the mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries⁷:

- Monitoring discards in Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries: methodology for data collection
- Monitoring the incidental catch of vulnerable species in Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries: methodology for data collection
- Technical guidelines for Scientific Surveys in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. Procedures and sampling for demersal (bottom and beam) trawl surveys and pelagic-acoustic surveys.

The objective of these protocols is to provide a harmonized methodological framework for data collection that is applicable to the context of different countries and enables the comparison of data at the regional and subregional levels

The GFCM Secretariat is working on internal data quality standards and related checks workflows to enhance the overall quality of fisheries data in support of the formulation of sound scientific advice in the Mediterranean and Black Sea by relevant GFCM subsidiary bodies. Following the decision taken at the 42nd session of the Commission (October 2018),

³ <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/data/safs>

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/reports>

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/reports/technical-meetings>

⁶ <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi/2018>

⁷ <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/activities/fisheries/mid-term-strategy>

a set of agreed data quality indicators are now under implementation by the GFCM Secretariat as a part of the established data processing procedures.

A review of the GFCM framework for the provision of advice is expected by 2020.

4. Development of applications (e.g. new module at Secretariat level, or enhancements in streamlining workflow at Partner level)

Endeavors mentioned in pts 1, 2 and 3 required enhancements to pre-existing platforms and assets established between 2012 and 2015 in line with rules and procedures in force in FAO. In this respect, former systems were extended to cope with emerging needs, while no further applications or systems were developed.

5. Development of case studies/prototypes

See points 2, 3 and 4 above.

6. Training or skills development

Since June 2017, GFCM has organized or funded participation to the following training courses:

- Training on basics of population dynamics and stock assessment under the hat of the SAC Subregional Committee for the Western Mediterranean (Tangiers, Morocco, January 2017)
- FAO/GFCM/JRC summer school in quantitative fisheries stock assessment Module 1 (IAMC-CNR of Capo Granitola, Italy, 10 to 15 July 2017)
- FAO/GFCM/JRC summer school in quantitative fisheries stock assessment Module 2 (IAMC-CNR of Capo Granitola, Italy, 18 to 22 July 2017)
- Beginners Stock Assessment Course “Integrated Assessments using Stock Synthesis” (Rome, Italy, 2 – 6 October 2017)
- FAO/GFCM/JRC summer school in quantitative fisheries stock assessment Module 1 (IAMC-CNR of Capo Granitola, Italy, 9 to 13 July 2018)
- FAO/GFCM/JRC summer school in quantitative fisheries stock assessment Module 2 (IAMC-CNR of Capo Granitola, Italy, 16 to 20 July 2018)
- 2nd edition of AMARE-MED: Advanced school on Multispecies modelling Approaches for ecosystem based marine REsource management in the MEDiterranean Sea (in-depth applications of Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) using different approaches) (Trieste, Italy, 30 July – 3 August 2018)
- Workshop on Age Reading of selected Black Sea species (Trabzon, Turkey, 28 January – 1 February 2019)

7. Promotional / fund raising activities

Nothing to report.

8. Planned activities during the coming intersessional period

Update fact sheets, including FIRMS status/trend indicators.