

## **Ad-Hoc Working Group of the Compliance Committee on VMS as a MCS tool**

**23 – 24 September 2008  
Rome, Italy**

### **PROSPECTUS**

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

In accordance to the Needs and Principles set forth in the General guidelines for a GFCM Control and Enforcement Scheme, adopted by GFCM in January 2005, the Thirty-First session of the Commission (January 2007) discussed a proposal for a recommendation concerning the establishment of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the GFCM Area<sup>1</sup>. Noting, indeed, that VMS was already operating in many Member country national fleets, the session recommended that it was crucial to set, at regional level, common measures to increase the benefits arising out the utilization of such monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) tool. The GFCM decided that further consideration of the proposed recommendation was necessary, thus postponing its adoption to the Thirty-Second session (February 2008).

In the course of the Thirty-Second session, several delegations, while re-discussing the above mentioned VMS issue, have underlined that a number of technical, legal, administrative and financial constraints still needed to be overcome in order to effectively establish VMS throughout the GFCM Area. As a result, the discussion remained open and it was agreed to convene during the intersession a relevant ad hoc working group within the framework of the GFCM Compliance Committee.

#### **2 MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKING GROUP**

The main objectives of The Ad-Hoc Working Group of the Compliance Committee on VMS as a MCS tool are set out in the following Terms of Reference:

- to follow up on the 2003 Venice Declaration and the GFCM General Guidelines for a control and enforcement Scheme, calling for the need to uphold flag State duties, including the implementation of a VMS as a MCS tool;
- to study recent developments concerning other MCS tools, linked to VMS, in the GFCM context;
- to consider measures and actions adopted by other RFMOs with respect to VMS;
- to evaluate the outcomes of responses by GFCM Members to the FAO global questionnaire on VMS;
- to share information on mechanisms concerning VMS, where existing, as established by Members;
- to consider technical, administrative, legal and/or financial constraints related to the implementation of VMS in GFCM Members with the aim to suggest ways to review the draft GFCM recommendation concerning the establishment of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the GFCM Area;
- to identify requirements for the promotion of regional/sub-regional projects on the implementation of VMS;
- to conduct any other relevant task specifically requested by the Members in the course of the meeting.

#### **3 OUTCOMES**

The expected outcomes of the Working Group are to:

1. raise participant's awareness on the requirements for the implementation of VMS at regional level;

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<sup>1</sup> Annex D. Report of the First session of the Compliance Committee, in Report of the 31<sup>st</sup> session (see [www.gfcm.org](http://www.gfcm.org)).

2. reach an agreement on a revised draft text of a GFCM recommendation concerning the establishment of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the GFCM Area, in order to facilitate its adoption by the Thirty-Third session of the Commission;
3. identify possible steps, to facilitate the implementation of VMS, as deemed necessary, in the GFCM Area.

The outcomes of the Working Group will be detailed in a report to be presented to the Compliance Committee for review, consideration and possible action.

#### **4 PROGRAMME AND TIMETABLE OF THE WORKING GROUP**

The provisional programme, timetable and structure of the Working Group are provided in Appendix 1.

#### **5 LOCATION AND DATES, INVITATIONS AND PARTICIPATIONS, LANGUAGE AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Working Group will be held at FAO in Rome, Italy, between 23 and 24 September 2008. Participants' work experience should be directly related to the development, reviewing or making VMS operational, so that the aforesaid outcomes can be realized. FAO will provide technical support in the delivery of the Working group. Pursuant to Article X.1 of the GFCM Agreement, expenses derived from the attendance to the Working Group ought to be provided by the respective Members.

#### **6 DOCUMENTS**

The proposed list of documents for the Working Group (to be made available on the GFCM website) is provided in Appendix 2. This includes national comments that Members are encouraged to submit concerning salient technical, legal or financial constraints to implement VMS at national level.

#### **7 WORKING GROUP INFORMATION**

General information about the Working Group can be obtained from the GFCM Website: ([www.gfcm.org](http://www.gfcm.org)). Information regarding participation, nominations and logistical arrangements is available from:

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## TIMETABLE

	Tuesday, 23 September 2008	Wednesday, 24 September 2008
08.30- 09.00 hours	<b>Registration: Turkish Lounge, FAO</b>	
09.00-10.15 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call to order</li> <li>• Election of Chair</li> <li>• Administrative arrangements and technical matters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of revised GFCM Draft Recommendation on VMS</li> <li>• Negotiations for an amended text of GFCM Draft Recommendation on VMS to be presented at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session</li> </ul>
<b>10.15-10.45 hours</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>
10.45-12.30 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GFCM Regional fleet register, vessel list and logbook: progress, including linkages with the FAO Global Record</li> <li>• Monitor, Control and Surveillance: the GFCM experience, general background information Discussion, questions and observations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Continued:</b> Negotiations for an amended text of GFCM Draft Recommendation on VMS to be presented at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session</li> </ul>
<b>12.30-14.00 hours</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
14.00-15.30 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMS: a cost effective tool in the fight against IUU fishing,</li> <li>• VMS and RFMOs: actions taken and measures adopted</li> </ul> Discussion, questions, observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Continued:</b> Negotiations for an amended text of GFCM Draft Recommendation on VMS to be presented at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session</li> <li>• The experience of GFCM Members: technical, administrative, legal and/or financial constraints to implement VMS (national comments on the identification of steps to overcome such constraints)</li> </ul> Discussion, questions and observations
<b>15.30-16.00 hours</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>	<b>Coffee break: 15.15 – 16.00 hours</b>
16.00-17.30 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAO Survey on VMS: Results for the GFCM Area, presentation of survey</li> <li>• The experience of GFCM Members: the implementation of VMS (national comments on how VMS is operating)</li> </ul> Discussion, questions, observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible steps forward (i.e. regional/sub-regional projects, training, workshops, others)</li> <li>• Concluding remarks and Conclusion of Working Group</li> </ul>

### PROVISIONAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

The following documents will be referenced at the Working Group, and others may be included. Electronic versions will be on the GFCM website and participants will be responsible for bringing their own copies to the Working Group.

1. General Guidelines for a GFCM Control and Enforcement Scheme: needs and principles (Appendix H, Report of 29th session of GFCM)
2. 2007 GFCM draft recommendation concerning the establishment of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the GFCM Area, including revised draft recommendation concerning the establishment of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the GFCM Area
3. GFCM Regional fleet register, list of authorized vessels and logbook: progress, including linkages with the FAO Global Record
4. Monitoring, Control and Surveillance: the GFCM experience, general background information
5. VMS: a cost effective tool in the fight against IUU fishing
6. VMS and RFMOs: actions taken and measures adopted
7. FAO Global Survey on VMS: presentation of the results related to the GFCM Area
8. National Comments on:
  - o the implementation of VMS at national level (how VMS is operating); or
  - o technical, administrative, legal and/or financial constraints towards implementing VMS at national level.

Note for Participants: it is suggested to the participants to prepare a brief presentation (max 10 minutes) briefly describing their experience with VMS. In case a VMS is in place at national level, it is suggested that the comments relate to how the Member is operating such system. In case a VMS is not yet in place (or is about to be established), it is suggested that the comments relate to the perceived major constraints undermining its implementation. This will help in identifying proposals concerning possible steps forward (i.e. regional/sub-regional projects, training, workshops, others) that could be considered, after the Working Group, by the GFCM Secretariat for submission to the Compliance Committee, if necessary. The Compliance Committee will consider any proposal from the Working Group at its Third session.