



GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN

COMMISSION GÉNÉRALE DES PÊCHES POUR
LA MÉDITERRANÉE



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**EXPERTS MEETING FOR THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GFCM-CAQ
NETWORK ON ENVIRONMENT AND AQUACULTURE IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN (EAM)**

Rome, Italy, 7-9 December 2005 (Cuba Room)

PROSPECTUS

The Environment and Aquaculture in the Mediterranean Network (EAM) was created in 1992 following the Mediterranean Regional Aquaculture Project (MEDRAP). In spite of this the EAM effectively ceased to operate as a network in 1996. The following document highlights some of the aspects and actions needed for the re-establishment of the Network under the aegis of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and more specifically the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ).

The present activity of the CAQ provides an opportunity for the re-establishment of the EAM. Furthermore, this has been a recommendation as a matter of priority at the extraordinary session of the Commission held in St Julians, Malta, from 19 to 23 July 2004. Indeed the Commission reiterated this will at its 29th Session and recommended an experts meeting for the re-establishment of EAM be convened as soon as the allocated funds became available¹.

Therefore, an Experts Meeting to establish the scientific and operational basis for a renewed EAM Network has been proposed. This meeting will take place in FAO headquarters, Rome, from 7 to 9 December 2005.

Meeting objectives

- a) To bring together the relevant expertise on environmental and networking operational issues in the Mediterranean.
- b) To agree on the best objectives and operational structure and for such network.
- c) To set-up initial common priorities and activities regarding environmental issues in the Mediterranean.

¹ Paragraph 99 of the report of the 29th session of GFCM.

Background and rationale

In 1993, the GFCM, through CAQ, was overseeing and guiding the work of the aquaculture related networks² originated from the UNDP/FAO Mediterranean Regional Aquaculture Project, MEDRAP (1990-1995). Among these, there was EAM (Environmental Aspects of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean).

The constitution of EAM took place in June 1993 (MEDRAP II 1993a)³ when it was proposed that MAP-PAP/RAC should undertake the coordination of EAM activities as a network. The only meeting of the EAM Coordinating Committee was held in April 1995.

The agreed objectives for EAM at that time were:

- a) contribute to optimization of aquaculture production through ecological characterization of coastal zones, set up of site identification methodology and management guidelines;
- b) contribute to protection of environment and aquaculture through monitoring, establishment of standards and frame for legislation; and
- c) provide information on the environmental performance of aquaculture to better position it within integrated coastal area management.

To fulfil these objectives EAM, reported several activities such as workshops and technical meetings on 1) impacts of intensive farming outfalls; 2) environmental aspects of shellfish culture; 3) integrated management of mollusc culture; 4) lagoon management, selection; and 5) protection of sites suitable for aquaculture.

Later in 1996, due to the absence of sufficient budgetary allocations and possibly a weak organization of the Network itself, the environmental aspects of Mediterranean aquaculture were somewhat included in the activities promoted by the TECAM and SELAM networks.

The growing³ complexity of aquaculture activities in the Mediterranean in addition to the numerous other initiatives, dealing with environmental effects, and the existence of CAQ offer the right scenario and opportunity for the re-establishment of the Network.

Meeting documents

Two documents are being prepared for the Experts Meeting:

- a) A background paper on the EAM and its re-establishment; this document will be sent before the meeting;
- b) A review and synthesis of published information on environmental issues in the Mediterranean basin. This document will be presented and discussed in the Meeting as a basis to prioritize activities, organize functions and adapt them to the structure of the Network, etc.

² Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (SIPAM); Socio-Economic and Legal Aspects of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (SELAM); and Technology and Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (TECAM).

³ Mediterranean Regional Aquaculture project II, Field Document 93/23.

Experts and participants are expected to:

- a) Participate actively in the discussion to achieve objectives.
- b) Present a very short summary (**8 minutes**) of current activities that the Institution represented is carrying out on aquaculture environmental issues in the Mediterranean.
- c) Bring all relevant information in printed and electronic form.

Expected meeting outputs

- a) An agreed proposed structure and operational framework for the EAM Network.
- b) List of potential priority issues and time frame for accomplishment.
- c) Proposed time frame for the short-term and mid-term work of the network.
- d) An updated synthesis of the Aquaculture environmental situation in the Mediterranean Sea.

Organization and Coordination of the Meeting

FAO

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