



**GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION
FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN**

Twenty-Fourth Session

12-15 July 1999, Alicante, Spain

**REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE SECOND SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Twenty-third Session of GFCM decided that the Second Session of the Scientific Advisory Committee should review the pending issues discussed but not concluded by the First Session of SAC concerning the definition of the appropriate management units for Mediterranean fisheries, the definition of parameters to express fishing efforts, the finalization of the terms of reference of the four Sub-Committees created by SAC and elect the Coordinators for those Sub-Committees. The Committee had also to review the situation of the stocks and evaluate the present available data on stock evaluation.

II. ELECTION OF COORDINATORS OF THE SAC/SUB-COMMITTEES

2. The following Coordinators of the Sub-Committees were elected:

Sub-Committee for Stock Assessment Mr J. Lleonart
(Spain)

Sub-Committee on Fishery Statistics and Information
Mr D. Levi (Italy)

Sub-Committee on Economic and Social Sciences Mr S.
Ben Salem (Tunisia)

Sub-Committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems
Mr G.P. Gabrielides (Cyprus)

3. The Committee urged GFCM Members to provide the Secretariat with the names of their experts to these Sub-Committees. So far, five countries have provided this information.

4. The Committee considered that the Coordinators of the Sub-Committees should be responsible for contacting experts in member countries according to the agenda of each Session considering that the composition of the Sub-Committees should be flexible and could change from one Session to another.

5. The Committee suggested that GFCM should allocate a budget which would encompass all the activities of the Sub-Committees.

III. FOLLOW-UP TO THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

6. The following was agreed:

- Management units: the Committee recommended that a Working Group be set up to analyse the suitability of the management units based on geographical consideration for statistical purposes and lay down clear scientific criteria leading to their adoption;
- Fishing effort parameters: the Committee agreed that a work programme to collect the required data would have to be drawn up. It was emphasized that artisanal fleets should be included in the regional fleet register. The latter needed to be defined further and timeframes for updating it should be established;
- Terms of reference of SAC/Sub-Committees: the terms of reference of the four Sub-Committees were reviewed; a final version of these terms of reference are attached to the report of the Second Session of SAC.

IV. CONCLUSIONS OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR STOCK ASSESSMENT (SCSA)

7. The Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee asked the SCSA to meet in order to review items 5, 6 and 7 of the Agenda (Attached to the report of the Session: GFCM:SAC2/99/Inf.3)

Evaluation of the Mediterranean swordfish resources

8. The Sub-Committee noted that the latest extensive stock assessments were made in 1995 and agreed that an updating should be carried out in 2000. The following data were identified as essential for future analysis:

- a) total catches by gear, country and year;
- b) catch and efforts by gear, country, year, region and month;
- and
- c) catch at size by gear, country, year, region and quarter.

General Appraisal of the Level of Knowledge on the State of the Different Groups of Stocks

9. An apparent increase in productivity of the Mediterranean suggested by marked increases in fishery landings over the last few decades was noted. Such a situation seems to merit further research, but does not reduce the urgent necessity for action to maintain fishing intensity in check, or even reduce it in some areas and some resources. The Sub-Committee suggested that one approach would be to compare the results of landing trends with biomass evaluations, using direct methods (surveys). The Sub-Committee recalled the multi-species nature of the Mediterranean fisheries, and hence the danger of applying exclusively single-species assessments for fishery management. The Sub-Committee noted the existence of stocks shared by two or more countries and recommended that some priority be given to the study of shared stocks.

National Reports on the Level of Knowledge of the State of the Different Groups of Stocks.

10. Several delegates presented a national report on the situation of the fisheries in their respective country. The Sub-Committee urged the delegates to present regularly reports on their national scientific activities relevant to the state of fisheries and fishery research in their respective countries.

Conservation of Juveniles and Spawners

11. It was noted that it was not possible to stop fishing on both juvenile and adult populations. It was pointed out that the impact of juveniles fisheries required more information on the natural mortality and fishing mortality, which is yet to be achieved. It was also suggested that, where complete data to support a full stock assessment are not available, the formulation of appropriate management measures will have to take into account the precautionary approach.

Identification of Areas/Seasons of High Concentration of Juveniles

12. Several technical papers dealing with the issue were reviewed by the Sub-Committee. It was suggested that two Working Groups be set up, one on small pelagics and the other on demersal. It was also suggested that the Agenda of the next Session of SAC should include an item on the

analysis of the effects on the populations and the fisheries resulting from the implementation of the GFCM Resolution on large pelagics species.

V. ANY OTHER MATTERS

13. Under this item, COPEMED activities were reviewed and the Committee welcomed the offer made by COPEMED to finance a Working Group on socio-economic indicators.

14. The Committee considered that the eastern Mediterranean should be given some priority. The possible funding of a project for the eastern Mediterranean as complementary to other existing sub-regional project (COPEMED and ADRIAMED) should be further investigated. In the interim, the preparation of a report which would describe the state of resources and outline proposals for management methods adapted to the sub-region is suggested as a first step in the process of initiating continuing activities in the eastern Mediterranean.

15. At the end of the Session, the Committee agreed on a programme of activities presented by the Sub-Committee for Stock Assessment for the intersessional period.