



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
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Organización
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para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

Twenty-ninth Session

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INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (2003-2004)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The report on intersessional activities is a standing item of the agenda for the sessions of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM). It covers activities of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and of the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ). Conclusions and advice on fisheries management and aquaculture development are reviewed in document GFCM/XIX/2005/6. Thus, this document summarizes only the major activities undertaken within the frameworks of the Committees since the Twenty-eighth Session (Tangiers, Morocco, 14-17 October 2003). Many additional activities were carried out by the CopeMed, AdriaMed, MedSudMed and MedFisis regional projects. They are referred to in the report of the Seventh Session of SAC (GFCM/XIX/2004/Inf. 6).

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2. The mandate of SAC for the intersessional period was stated in the "Reference Framework" attached as Appendix H of the Report of the Twenty-seventh Session of GFCM, as updated at its Twenty-eighth session in the programme of work of the Commission and further framed through the autonomous budget adopted at the Extraordinary session of GFCM (St Julians, Malta, 19-23 July 2004).

3. The Seventh Session of SAC was held in Rome, Italy, from 19 to 22 October 2004. It was attended by delegates from 19 Members of the Commission and observers from the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). SAC acknowledged the highest participation since its inception in 1999, including with representatives from all the Black Sea Members. Similarly, participation in the meetings of the subsidiary bodies increased substantially in 2004, both in term of countries represented and disciplines covered, with a notable involvement of scientists from the Eastern Mediterranean. SAC, however, reiterated that Working Groups should be widely open to favour

the greatest participation, while the Sub-Committees could enjoy a more limited participation, if a steady representation of the relevant national institutes was ensured. SAC insisted once more on the need for more scientific contributions, data and analysis, as well as a greater coverage of GFCM Geographical Sub-Areas (GSAs).

4. SAC further reiterated the need to pursue effort for strengthen networking and enhanced accountability of national institutions, especially through National Focal points and Correspondents for each Sub-committee. The Committee reviewed the updated list of its Focal Points and invited Members to keep it updated through the Secretariat.

5. SAC, its four Sub-Committees and Working groups worked intensively during the eleven months of the 2004 intersession. This is reflected by the documents produced¹ and fifteen meetings organized. Thus, with the exception of a workshop on the measurement of fishing effort and the postponing of the third meeting of the GFCM/ICCAT Working group on Sustainable Tuna Farming, all the meetings endorsed by the Commission were convened, as indicated in the table below. In addition, the Workshop on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Mediterranean was organized in June 2004.

Meetings of SAC subsidiary bodies

	Title	Date (2004)	Place	Experts ² /Country Participation
Stock Assessment	Annual Session	10-12 May	Malaga, Spain	15 / 8
	Working Group on Demersal Species	6-7 May	Malaga, Spain	21 / 7
	Working Group on Small Pelagic Species	6-7 May	Malaga, Spain	15 / 5
	Workshop on Biological Reference Points	20-21 April	Rome, Italy	60 / 7
Statistics and Information	Annual session	10-12 May	Malaga, Spain	20 / 13
Economic and Social Sciences	Annual Session	10-12 May	Malaga, Spain	16 / 10
	Working Group on Socio-economic Indicators	15-17 March	Barcelona, Spain	8 / 5
Marine Environment and Ecosystems	Annual Session	10-12 May	Malaga, Spain	20 / 7

¹ In addition to producing (seventeen) Reports for each of the meetings, the Secretariat with support from FAO regional and global projects produced six monographies in the GFCM *Study and Reviews Series* (SR). They covers the following topics: Ecosystem Effects of Fishing (SR No74); Comparative Study on Fisheries Regulatory Framework (SR No75); IUU fishing in the Mediterranean (SR No 76); Inventory of GFCM scientific and technical publication since 1952 (SR No 77); Interaction between Capture Fisheries and Aquaculture (SR N0 78). A methodological Review on Biological Reference Points and an update on Macro-economic parameters of Mediterranean fisheries, are also under preparation.

² GFCM Secretariat and FAO regional projects staff excluded.

Meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee

Title	Date	Place
Seventh Session	19-22 October (2004)	Rome, Italy
Coordination of the four Sub-Committees	13 May (2004)	Malaga, Spain
7 th Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagics	13-14 May (2004)	Malaga, Spain
2 nd Joint GFCM ³ /ICCAT Working Group on Sustainable Tuna Farming	15-17 December (2003)	Izmir, Turkey
Joint SCIS/SCES/SCSA Group of Experts on Operational Units	2-3 December (2003)	Madrid, Spain
SAC/CAQ/AdriaMed Consultation on the Interaction between Aquaculture and Capture Fisheries	5-7 November (2003)	Rome, Italy
Coordination of the four Sub-Committees	18 October (2003)	Tangiers, Morocco

6. At its Twenty-eighth session, the Commission endorsed the composition of the new Bureau of SAC. It acknowledged its importance, especially when enlarged as the **Coordinating Meeting of the Sub-committees** (CMSC) and agreed that specific terms of reference be formulated accordingly⁴. During the intersession, the CMSC met twice. Its work mainly entailed analysing transversal issues and the promotion of stronger interface between the respective activities of the subsidiaries. It also provided additional suggestions to further enhance the functioning of the Sub-committees as a follow-up to the independent appraisal of the achievements of the Scientific Advisory Committee which was carried out in August 2003, i.e., during the intersession of SAC, and it drafted terms of reference for the SAC Bureau, including for Sub-committee Coordinators and the CMSC itself.

7. At the Seventh session, many delegations expressed the views that the CMSC should work as a functional steering group to harmonize disciplinary inputs and outputs from the Sub-Committees, coordinate transversal issues and prepare integrated opinions on fisheries management which would then be presented to SAC. The Committee further favoured formalizing the status of the CMSC although keeping it flexible and responsive, thereby convening as often as necessary, but reporting formally to SAC with the appropriate format. The draft terms of reference for the CMSC and the Coordinators of the Sub-committees are annexed to document GFCM/XIX/2005/8 for review and possible endorsement by the Commission.

8. SAC reviewed the report of the Ad hoc Meeting of Experts on the **Independent Appraisal of the Achievements of the Scientific Advisory Committee** (1999-2003), was presented to the of GFCM, in November 2003. The Committee commended this work. It acknowledged the guiding principles already endorsed by the Commission at Twenty-eighth session were this work was presented. SAC emphasized in particular the need to foster on task-oriented advisory process driven by GFCM objectives and to renew efforts to formulate multidisciplinary management advice, encompassing multispecies fisheries, in conformity with an ecosystem approach. For improving the cost efficiency of SAC functioning, the immediate priority was that GFCM Members comply with their statutory obligations and therefore effectively contribute scientific inputs and ensure steady participation of scientists.

³ SAC and CAQ.

⁴ Paragraphs 16 and 19 of the Report of the 28th Session (doc. GFCM/XIX/2005/Inf.4).

9. The four Sub-committees held their session in parallel, in Malaga, Spain, in May 2004. At its Seventh session, SAC endorsed or made the following **major observations emanating from the Sub-Committees**:

Sub-Committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA):

- a total of 22 assessments (14 on demersals and 8 on small pelagics) were reviewed. These included 9 species and covered 7 GSAs. Only two assessments on sardine and anchovy in the Adriatic involved shared stocks;
- no new addition to the list of shared stocks was proposed;
- regarding a length at first maturity of 11 cm for the anchovy of the Western Mediterranean and a length of 9 cm for the anchovy of the Adriatic, there was a need to consider the value of L25 and L75, in addition to L50 been used;
- the “traffic-light approach” was favoured by the Workshop on Reference points; the list of performance indicators and related criteria identified were pertinent but needed further work prior to formal adoption, especially in relation to multispecies assessment works;
- the substitution of Mr P. Oliver (Spain) by Ms C. Karlou-Riga (Greece) as Coordinator of the Sub-Committee.

Sub-Committee on Economic and Social Sciences (SCESS)

- data collection on socio-economic indicators, application of such indicators and development of bio-economic models in fisheries management, training in fisheries socio-economics and management, and fisheries market analyses remain SCESS medium-term research priorities;
- the collection of required data by fleet segmentations and estimate of socio-economic indicators have proved feasible across the whole Mediterranean; there is a need to enlarge such work, as a priority, to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea;
- it is worth strengthening the collaboration between SCESS and SCSA on data collection as well as with the CAQ Socio-economic and Legal Network (SELAM), especially with regards to market and environmental impact analyses;
- following up on the joint CopeMed/AdriaMed/Secretariat comparative study of fisheries laws and regulation, there is advantage to pursue the monitoring of legal management-related frameworks, including through convening an *ad hoc* Legal Working Group whenever deemed appropriate.

Sub-Committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystem (SCMEE)

- the lack of contributions on the impact of surface and bottom longline fisheries on non-commercial fish species, birds, and turtles had hindered advances in the analysis of the effects of fishing gears on marine ecosystems;
- there is concern that fishing at depths greater than 1000m may develop;
- activities on the impact of large scale driftnet fisheries on biodiversity and on threatened or endangered species need to be strengthened;
- implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) proves difficult; efforts should be renewed, including through relying on quantitative ecosystem-based indicators.

Sub-Committee on Statistics and Information (SCISS)

- collaboration with FAO/FIGIS-FIRMS on the fisheries inventory is satisfactory;
- progress have been achieved in updating the MEDSTAT programme in a growing number of countries, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean through MedFis. Request have been made to extend the programme to some countries in the Black Sea;

- the standardization of fishing effort by Operational Unit should be addressed as a priority;
- MedSudMed, MEDITS and CopeMed (tuna and resources) biological survey databases and information systems are developing; there would be benefits to receiving information from other other statistical programmes (e.g. FAO-FIDI, Eurostat, EFARO);
- the Secretariat is making efforts to develop the GFCM website; there may be a need to identify in future a GFCM website master, enabling timely processing and dissemination of SAC documentation and related information.

10. In addition to the activities of the Sub-committees, the following issues were addressed through the respective subsidiary of SAC.

- The *Eighth session of the Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagic species* was convened back to back to the meetings of the Sub-committees. It focused on the review of the biological knowledge and data available on small-tunas, billfish and albacore. Overall statistical data on albacore were too limited for allowing any reliable assessment. Data on small tunas (Atlantic bonito, Atlantic black skipjack, bullet tuna) as well as of billfish and other tuna-like species were appraised as being very poor. The Working group put forward a proposal for a regional research project on small tuna to address this state of affair. It was noted that the recommendations made in 2002 concerning the collection of data on albacore have been seldom implemented. SAC further emphasized the need for proper monitoring of small tuna species, including collecting socio-economic data and information these fisheries at subregional and regional levels. Closer scientific collaboration with ICCAT was called for. SAC recognized that this would entail updating and formalizing the statute of this subsidiary to make it a proper *ad hoc* transversal Working group endowed with a mandate broader than gathering data for stock assessments, as it is presently⁵. SAC favoured the drafting of terms of reference that clarify the functioning of its subsidiary for further formalization by the two parent bodies. A preliminary draft of such mandate, jointly prepared by the GFCM and the ICCAT Secretariats is attached to document GFCM/XIX/2005/6 for follow up by the Commission.
- At its Twenty-eighth session, the Commission noted that little progress had been made by the *Joint EIFAC/GFCM ad hoc Working Party on the Management of Sturgeon*⁶, which was established in 2001. SAC was informed of the outcome of the meeting of this Working Party, convened during the Twenty-third session of EIFAC (Wierzba, Poland, 26 May–2 June 2004). The Committee acknowledged that so far the outputs of the EIFAC/GFCM Working group were limited. Taking into account its current workload and priorities, the Committee suggested that GFCM withdraw for the time being from the Working Party but that EIFAC be invited to keep SAC informed of future development, activities and results.

Other intersessional activities of relevance to capture fisheries

11. At its Twenty-eighth session, GFCM reviewed issues common to IUU fishing, including the status and implementation of the IPOA-IUU in the Mediterranean and recent actions and measures taken by selected regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) in this respect. The Commission acknowledged the wish expressed by Members that the implementation of the IPOA-IUU be addressed at both national and regional levels through GFCM. It decided to adopt a step-by-step approach so that the various dimensions of the issue could be tackled in a holistic manner. The Commission further agreed that a **Workshop of experts from GFCM Members on**

⁵ Paragraph 50 of the Report of the 19th Session of GFCM (Livorno, Italy, 27 February-3 March 1989).

⁶ Report of the 28th Session, paragraph 13.

IUU Fishing in the Mediterranean should be organized. This Workshop was held in Rome, Italy on 23 and 26 June 2004⁷ with support from Japan and the FAO FishCode Programme. The report of the Workshop is provided as document GFCM/XIX/2005/Inf. 8.

12. The Workshop drew upon article 9 of the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference for the Sustainable Development of Fisheries in the Mediterranean (Venice, Italy, November 2003) and an analysis of questionnaires, respectively from FAO on the implementation of the IPOA-IUU and from the GFCM Secretariat on specific complementary issues. The use of VMS for certain fleets; revision of the logbook system; and requirements for improved matching among vessel characteristics, fishing licences and permits as developed in the EC Action Plan for capacity strengthening were addressed. The Workshop reviewed the status of IUU fishing in the Mediterranean and major issues of concern at national and regional levels. It identified principles and priority activities keeping in mind cost-efficiency considerations. Priorities included: the establishment of a regional vessel register and related list of authorized vessels (white list); identification of reporting procedure and design of a framework for a control scheme. A preliminary Work Plan was identified to be eventually implemented through the establishment of a GFCM Special Working Group on IUU Fishing, as detailed in document GFCM/XIX/2005/6.

13. At its Seventh Session, SAC reviewed the major **activities of the FAO Regional Projects**, namely, CopeMed, AdriaMed, MedSudMed and MedFisis. Those activities encompass research programmes, consultations, working groups, training and publications. A summary, including information on the preparation of EastMed is provided in document GFCM/XIX/2005/Mad.5. The Committee reiterated the importance of the support provided by these projects to its work. Progress achieved by AdriaMed and CopeMed on the identification of Operational Units were particularly noted. The Committee insisted on the need to strengthen the interface among the regional projects and to extend to other subregions those activities which have proven efficient in a particular area.

14. As stated in the 2003 Work Programme of SAC and CAQ, an **Expert Consultation on the Interaction between Aquaculture and Capture Fisheries** was organized by AdriaMed in November 2003 (see document GFCM/XIX/2005/mad.6). The Committee reviewed the results of the Consultation and acknowledged the approach used and the indicators identified. SAC further noted the interest expressed on this issue by the CAQ at its Fourth session. It supported the suggestion that joint activities be carried out between the two Committees, especially on areas such as the management of lagunes, biodiversity and environmental consideration, restocking and introduction of alien species, space competition and market.

15. As requested by the Commission, the Secretariat increased its efforts to enhance **cooperation with other regional organizations** concerned with fisheries issues in the Mediterranean. This included: contributing to the formulation of a draft regional project for mitigating the impact of by-catch on cetacean populations in the ACCOBAMS area at a meeting organized early March at FAO Headquarters; participating actively in the Legal Workshop convened by the IUCN Mediterranean Center mid March 2004 and entitled "Toward an Improved Governance of the Mediterranean beyond Territorial Sea; participation to the meetings⁸ for the formulation of the Regional Component of the GEF/UNEP project entitled Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem: Implementation of regional actions for the protection of the environmental resources of the Mediterranean and its coastal areas, GFCM Secretariat was also present at the 37th CIEMS Congress and at the 18th Session of ICCAT. Inputs were also provided for drafting the 2004 version of the Mediterranean Action Plan and the

⁷ The Workshop was thus convened in conjunction with the June 2004 FAO Technical Consultation to Review Progress and Promote the Full Implementation of the IPOA to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing and the IPOA for the Management of Fishing Capacity.

⁸ Athens, Greece, 21-24th June 2004, and Trieste, Italy, 11-12 October 2004.

Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development which is under preparation under the aegis of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development, following the decision of the 12th session of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention⁹.

16. The activities of the **Joint GFCM/ICCAT ad hoc Working Group on Sustainable Bluefin Tuna Farming**, are reported below.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

17. During the intersessional period, the fourth Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) met in Alexandria, Egypt, from 7 to 9 June 2004 and was attended by delegates from 15 Members of the Commission. The Session reviewed the status of aquaculture in the region and the activities of the networks linked to the Committee. The Report of the session is quoted GFCM/XIX/2005/Inf.7.

18. Activities carried out under the framework of CAQ between October 2003 to February 2005 involved mainly the following areas: i) organization of an ad hoc Expert Meeting on the External Evaluation of CAQ and its Networks; ii) active participation in the work of the Joint ad hoc GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Sustainable Bluefin Tuna Farming in the Mediterranean; iii) preparation of the revised regional aquaculture project proposal; iv) data collection and processing by the network on Information Systems for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (SIPAM); v) courses and seminars by the network on Technology of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (TECAM), dealing with technical and biological aspects of aquaculture development. The status of the meetings scheduled for the intersession is shown in the Table below.

Meetings of CAQ

Title	Date	Place	Participation ¹⁰
Second Meeting of the GFCM/ICCAT WG on Sustainable BFT Farming	15-17 Dec. 2003	Izmir, Turkey	17
Ad Hoc Meeting of Experts on the External evaluation of the GFCM-CAQ and its Networks	29-30 March 2004	Rome, Italy	7
Fourth Session of the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ)	7-9 June 2004	Alexandria, Egypt	30
SIPAM ad hoc Coordination Meeting	9-10 Dec. 2004	Rome, Italy	6 ¹¹
1 st Workshop on Bio-indicators for Sustainable Aquaculture	postponed to mid 2005	Montpellier, France	--
Third Meeting of the GFCM/ICCAT WG on Sustainable BFT Farming	Postponed to: 16-18 March 2005	Rome, Italy	--

⁹ Monaco, November 2001, as confirmed by the 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Athens, Greece, in July 2002.

¹⁰ GFCM Secretariat and FAO regional officers and project staff excluded.

¹¹ GFCM Secretariat included.

SIPAM and TECAM/SELAM Meetings

Title	Date	Place	No. Participants/ Countries
SIPAM Annual Meeting	Postponed to: April 2005	Split, Croatia	--/--
TECAM advanced course on “Recirculation systems and their application in aquaculture	12-16 January 2004	Sète, France	42/12
Advanced course on “Marketing of seafood products: trends and challenges”	16-20 February 2004 ¹²	Zaragoza, Spain	23/11
Advanced seminar on “Offshore mariculture”	17-22 May 2004	Zaragoza, Spain	34/13
Advance course on “Design and management of bivalve mollusc hatcheries”	14-19 February 2005	Zaragoza, Spain	35/13 ¹³

19. The external evaluation of SIPAM was first proposed at the Third Session of the Committee and subsequently the recommendation was endorsed by the Commission at its Twenty-seventh Session. During the Twenty-eighth Session of the Commission, the Secretariat was additionally requested to consider undertaking a full external evaluation of the whole activities of CAQ in addition to SIPAM. The **Ad hoc Meeting of Experts on the External Evaluation of the GFCM-CAQ and its Networks** was held in Rome, Italy, from 29 to 30 March 2004 (doc. GFCM/XIX/2005/Mad.4). The meeting was attended by six GFCM experts in their personal capacity, members of the Secretariat and the independent consultant recruited to carry out the evaluation. The importance of appraising the work of CAQ taking into consideration the entry into force of the GFCM autonomous budget in the near future was stressed.

20. The second meeting of the Joint *ad hoc* GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Sustainable Bluefin Tuna Farming was convened in Izmir, Turkey, from 15 to 17 December 2003. Summary reports on i) capture fisheries, ii) aquaculture, and iii) marketing of bluefin tuna, based on national surveys, were presented so as to finalize the snapshot of the current situation of bluefin tuna farming and its impact on capture fisheries and the environment. It was agreed at the meeting that these outputs would constitute the basis for drafting the technical guidelines for sustainable bluefin tuna farming that would be presented and finalized at a third meeting, scheduled to take place mid 2004. Due to a number of circumstances which delayed the drafting of the guidelines, the meeting was first postponed to December 2004 and is now scheduled to be convened mid March 2005.

¹² Course was organized within the framework of the training activities organized by CIHEAM in collaboration with the FAO Fisheries Department in the field of fisheries and aquaculture pursuing the objectives identified by the GFCM.

¹³ Provisional data.

21. As requested by GFCM at its last session, the Secretariat proceeded with the drafting of a revised and focused **regional aquaculture project proposal** in support of the implementation of the Plan of Action for responsible aquaculture in the Mediterranean, endorsed at Second Session of CAQ (2000) as well as by the Commission in 2001. The revised project was finalized and presented at the Fourth Session of CAQ. The Committee acknowledged that the updated proposal listed objectives that focused attention on activities considered of relevance to the region. However, it was recognized that regional differences existed making it difficult to prepare a single project that could be endorsed by all Members as well as attract donor support. It was further suggested to split priorities differentiating issues of a regional common interest from priorities related specifically to a subregion. Identified priority activities will thus constitute components of the CAQ short- and medium-term programme.

22. The **SIPAM Network** fully operated during the intersessional period, working through the Regional Centre located in Tunisia. The Centre continued to cover its main tasks which consisted mainly in collating and verifying the national data submitted from the SIPAM Member countries, in the compilation of the regional aggregated databases and downloading onto the website as well as providing technical support in the operation of the system. A more dynamic, user friendly and a first level integration with other relevant information systems (FAO FIGIS) of SIPAM-on-the-Web has been developed. This upgrading currently enable all National Coordinators and external users to add aquaculture information of national and regional interest. An ad hoc SIPAM training course on its new functions was organized in Rome, Italy, from 23 to 27 February 2004 for the SIPAM Regional Centre Programmer with special emphasis on the SIPAM portal structure and maintenance. The training was financed by the FAO Fisheries Department. Furthermore a SIPAM website User Manual has been prepared and completed.

23. The national contribution towards the enrichment of the SIPAM databases and website as a whole has not been homogenous in terms of data and information submission. The level of efficiency still depended almost entirely on the personal commitment of each National Coordinator. Efforts have continuously been made to encourage all National Coordinators to timely provide the data and information required by the system. In the absence of a full commitment by the GFCM Member countries involved, this has often been unsuccessful. It should be noted that during the Fourth Session of the CAQ the Committee endorsed¹⁴, among other things, providing the SIPAM National Coordinators with an institutional mandate and adequate budget at national level to enable them carry out their activities. Furthermore, the Terms of Reference (TORs) of the National Coordinators were reviewed and endorsed by the Committee.

24. Four activities (3 courses and a seminar) have been organized under the **TECAM network** by CIHEAM through the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (CIHEAM-IAMZ) and in collaboration with a number of local organizations and support of FAO Fisheries Department. Approximalely 140 participants have benefitted from these training activities of which one third have been financed by CIHEAM and FAO. The Advanced Course on "Recirculation systems and their application in aquaculture" took place in Sète (France) in January 2004 with the main objective to review the basis of Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) and examine the different systems, designs, operations and application of RAS, with emphasis on Mediterranean aquaculture. The Advanced Course on "Marketing of seafood products: trends and challenges" took place in Zaragoza, (Spain) in February 2004 within the framework of the training activities organized by CIHEAM pursuing objectives also identified by the GFCM. The course provided an integrated contemporary vision of the critical factors shaping seafood markets. The Advanced Seminar on "Offshore mariculture" also took place in Zaragoza

¹⁴ Paragraphs 55 and 56 of the Report of the 4th CAQ Session (doc. GFCM/29/2005/Inf.7).

in May 2004. The Advance Course on “Design and management of bivalve mollusc hatcheries” was under preparation when the present document was produced. The course will take place in Zaragoza from 14 to 19 February 2005. The directory of Mediterranean Aquaculture Diagnostic Laboratories was completed and published in a special volume of the CIHEAM journal *Cahiers Options Méditerranéennes* and forwarded to SIPAM for linkage on their website.

25. A 1-day session devoted to the sustainable development of aquaculture took place during the last Bordeaux Aquaculture international meeting in September 2004 (France). The two key issues addressed were: i) how to define and characterize the sustainability of aquaculture and ii) how to put into practice a sustainable aquaculture. This session established the basis for the organization of the planned **workshops on indicators for a sustainable Mediterranean aquaculture**.

26. In relation to the request made by GFCM at its Extraordinary session¹⁵ that FAO consider to make available to the Commission the services of [another] staff Member, the Secretariat hired through the FAO Visiting Scientists Programme a Senior Economist to undertake trend analysis on fisheries and aquaculture in the GFCM area, thereby responding as well to suggestions made respectively by SAC and CAQ.

IV. SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

27. The Commission is invited to review and discuss the activities carried out by its Committees and the Secretariat during the intersessional period.

28. The Commission may wish to provide guidance on issues of particular relevance expressed by its Committees, including on their *modus operandi*.

¹⁵ Paragraph 32 of the Report of the Extraordinary session.