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منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
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Organisation  
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Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
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## GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

### Twenty-ninth Session

Rome, Italy, 21-25 February 2005

## MANAGEMENT OF MEDITERRANEAN FISHERIES

### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The management of Mediterranean fisheries by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) is mainly based on scientific knowledge and related analysis and advice, as provided by its Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and its Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ). The subsidiary bodies of the Commission carried out a number of activities during the intersessional period, as reported in document GFCM/XXIX/2005/5. The outputs of these activities were reviewed by the respective Committee. The following is a summary of the main conclusions, advice and recommendations emanating from the Seventh session of SAC (Rome, Italy, October 2004), the Workshop on IUU fishing in the Mediterranean and the Fourth session of CAQ (Alessandria, Egypt, June 2004), for consideration by the Commission.

### II. CONCLUSIONS AND ADVICE FROM THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2. The conclusions and advice adopted by SAC at its Seventh session stemmed mainly from the recommendations and suggestions made by its four Sub-committees and by cross-sectoral and/or Joint Working groups as detailed in document GFCM/XXIX/2005/Inf.6.
3. The Committee endorsed, amended or formulated the following conclusions, advice or suggestions from each of its Sub-Committee.

#### **Sub-Committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA)**

4. The Committee decided to put before the Commission the following advice on selected stocks and species in some of the GFCM Geographical Sub-Areas (GSAs)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The map of the GFCM GSAs, as adopted in 2001 is attached to this document for ease of reference.

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- **Hake** (*Merluccius merluccius*) in GSAs 01 (Northern Alboran), 05 (Balearic Islands) and 06 (Northern Spain): selectivity should be improved, e.g. by using 40 mm square mesh size, instead of the 40mm diamond mesh size; fishing effort should be controlled on nursery areas.
  - **Red mullet** (*Mullus barbatus*) in GSAs 01 and 06: more effective control in closed coastal areas should be encouraged to protect recruitment; stricter controls of the legal mesh size to improve the selectivity should be ensured. Moreover, use of 40 mm square mesh size, which might improve exploitation pattern (compared to the 40 mm diamond mesh size), should be encouraged.
  - **Striped mullet** (*Mullus surmuletus*) in GSA 05: fishing effort should not be increased.
  - **Red mullet** (*Mullus barbatus*) and **deep water rose shrimp** (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) in GSA 03 (Southern Alboran): fishing effort in coastal areas should be reduced through transferring part of the effort to more offshore fishing grounds; mesh size regulations and coastal areas closures should be properly enforced.
  - **Blue and red shrimp** (*Aristeus antennatus*) in GSAs 01, 05 and 06; **giant red shrimp** (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) in GSA 11 (Sardinia); **red mullet** (*Mullus barbatus*) and **bluefish** (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) in GSA 14 (Gulf of Gabes): fishing effort should not be increased.
  - **Anchovy** (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) and **sardine** (*Sardina pilchardus*) in GSAs 01 and 06: fishing effort should not be increased; minimum size at catch should be adjusted to length at first maturity which is 11 cm; control on the commercialization of undersized specimens should be improved; yearly assessments should be undertaken to guarantee timely the availability of catch and effort data; data acquisition for proceeding towards other indirect methods of assessment, e.g. tuned VPA, should be pursued.
  - **Sardine** (*Sardina pilchardus*) in GSA 03: a seasonal closure of one month during the sardine spawning period should be implemented; more information on the growth and reproductive parameters should be acquired to ameliorate the assessment; a seasonal closure should be established for the areas where juveniles concentrate during the recruitment period (May-June); fishing in nursery grounds (small bays and lagoons) should be prohibited.
  - **Sardine** (*Sardina pilchardus*) and **anchovy** (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) in GSA 17 (Northern and Central Adriatic): taking into account the precautionary approach, the fishing effort should not be allowed to rise.

5. SAC however concurred that these advice on selected species or stocks do not constitute comprehensive management advice, as in most instances the socio-economic or environmental appraisal of such advice are still needed to be formulated and integrated.

6. The Committee also:

- recommended to fine tune the methodology concerning the length at first maturity of anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*), especially to consider the value of L25 and L75 in addition to the value of L50;
- reiterated the importance of reviewing assessment methods;
- recommended that, in addition to indicators and reference points for different single stocks, specific indicators be identified for each fishery and operational units (poly-indicator system), and agreed that each reference point should undergo a robustness and/or sensitivity test before being formally adopted.

7. SAC further agreed that the SCSA should organize the following meetings: a Workshop on stock assessment methodology for the Black Sea, a Brain Storming Workshop on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and a Workshop on methodologies for gear selectivity.

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### **Sub-Committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems (SCMEE)**

8. Based on the conclusions and suggestions from the SCMEE, the Committee:
- agreed, in relation to the incidental catches of protected species and on the by-catch of large migratory species, to favour the use of the MED-LEM (Mediterranean Large Elasmobranchs Monitoring) protocol and information system, and to promote coordination with ongoing regional programmes aimed at monitoring by-catches of all vulnerable species, in particular those related to cartilaginous fishes as well as those related to large pelagic sharks;
  - strongly advised to refrain expanding deep water fishing operations beyond the limit of 1000 m (which is a depth limit currently not exploited), in view of scientific considerations on the presence both of unmapped sensitive habitats (deep water coral reefs, sea vents, sea mounds, etc.), and of the fragile nature of deep water fish assemblages as well as the presence of juveniles of different crustaceans species at such depths;
  - invited GFCM to consider reviewing the recent ICCAT recommendation on driftnets, and to enlarge the monitoring on large scale driftnets to the whole Mediterranean.

### **Sub-Committee on Statistics and Information (SCSI)**

9. The Committee called the attention of GFCM on the need to promote the application of the Operational Unit (OU) concept in the other GSAs, taking into consideration the positive outcome of the AdriaMed pilot study on the identification and listing of OUs and the forthcoming outputs from the CopeMed pilot study in the Alboran Sea.

10. SAC also requested SCSI to:
- hold a workshop on the standardization of fishing effort measurement, relying as appropriate on available data from the AdriaMed and CopeMed areas;
  - contribute to further improvement of the GFCM website, possibly with support from the FAO regional projects, including through the provision of relevant documents and information;
  - extend to the Black Sea the MedStat fishery statistical programme, with support from MedFisis.

### **Sub-Committee on Economic and Social Sciences (SCSS)**

11. SAC called the attention of GFCM in particular on the need for:
- preparing guidelines on: i) market studies and on ii) sociological studies, taking into account the methodology respectively applied through AdriaMed on this issue;
  - seeking the support of FAO/FIPP to organize a technical meeting on the use of socio-economic indicators for fisheries management;
  - supporting and encouraging data collection work while ensuring basic requirements on data quality and the promotion of related applications using bio-economic models;
  - strengthening the interface with the work of SCSI, SCSA and CAQ/SELAM;
  - initiating investigations on socioeconomic reference points on selected GSAs.

***Ad hoc* Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on stocks of Large pelagic species**

12. The Seventh session of the *ad hoc* Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group stated that available data on albacore were too limited to allow any reliable assessment of that species. Data on small tunas (Atlantic bonito, Atlantic black skipjack, bullet tuna) as well as of billfish and other tuna-like species, were very poor. It noted that important quantity of catch is reported as unidentified species in the ICCAT catch database. The Working group also stressed that, while the presence of skipjack is unusual, that of bigeye, blue marlin, white marlin and other tropical spearfish was occasional in the Mediterranean.

13. The recommendations of the Working Group included the following:

- the historical ICCAT database on catches should be reviewed in order to complete data and validate existing statistics;
- all countries should make an effort to improve the small tuna statistics as well as the current knowledge on biology, stock structure and other relevant aspects of these species and that another GFCM/ICCAT joint meeting be held during the next Small Tuna Species Group meeting of ICCAT;
- the objectives of the proposed research project on small tuna should be supported by ICCAT and GFCM;
- the collection of statistics of small tuna should be considered in the work of the FAO regional projects, particularly MedFisis and, CopeMed should pursue current research activities on Large pelagic species;
- a review of the historical series on shark statistics should be undertaken.

14. These recommendations were presented to the 2004 meeting of ICCAT Standing Committee on Fisheries Research (SCRS). SAC expressed its conformity with the opinions which had been submitted to the ICCAT/SCRS.

15. The Scientific Advisory Committee also noted with concern that the recommendations made in 2002 by the Joint Working group on data collection on albacore have been seldom implemented and called the attention of GFCM on this matter.

16. SAC also discussed the need to update the status of this subsidiary and agreed that proper terms of reference, together with clarifications on the functioning of the Joint Working group should be identified jointly and formalized by the two parent bodies. Draft terms of reference are suggested for GFCM consideration in document GFCM/XXIX/2005/8, entitled "Issues related to the functioning of the Commission".

17. It should further be noted that, at its 18<sup>th</sup> Special Session (New, Orleans, USA, 15-21 November 2004), ICCAT adopted a number of Recommendations of direct relevance to Mediterranean fisheries. These recommendations are provided in document GFCM/XXIX/2005/Inf. for consideration by GFCM. They include recommendations concerning, and/or on:

- 04-05 : the Western Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Rebuilding Program and the Conservation and Management Measures for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean;
- 04-06 : Bluefin Tuna Farming;
- 04-07 : Bluefin Tuna Size Limit;
- 04-10 : the Conservation of Sharks caught in association with Fisheries managed by ICCAT;
- 04-12: the adoption of Measures concerning Sport and Recreational Fishing Activities in the Mediterranean Sea.

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### III. CONCLUSIONS OF THE GFCM WORKSHOP ON IUU FISHING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

18. The Workshop considered the implications of a step-by-step approach as indicated by the Commission at its 27<sup>th</sup> session. It identified the following Principles and Priority activities.

19. The Principles emphasized, among other, the need:

- to focus on implementing IPOA-IUU tools that respond to specific GFCM management needs at sub-regional and regional levels. This entails recognizing some differences between GFCM and other RFMOs, including in term of priorities and management tools, such as the use of the operational unit concept;
- to take into account the extent and value of the fisheries, existing management measures, localized approaches and overall the special characteristics of Mediterranean fisheries;
- to adopt an holistic approach that addresses the special circumstances of IUU fishing in the GFCM Area;
- to rely upon on going GFCM initiatives, including the regional and sub-regional projects;
- for Members to provide, as appropriate, the necessary inputs for combating IUU activities and to regularly identify needs and steps, at national, sub-regional and regional levels, consistent with a “bottom up” approach.

20. The Workshop identified the following Priorities and sequence of activities.

- establishment of a regional vessel register for designated classes of vessels. This will require: defining criteria (e.g. the fisheries, vessel type); developing national lists of vessels; establishing a data and information system (noting the relevance of the MedFisis project in this respect); collating and processing available data; and establishing a preliminary list of authorized vessels at regional level (white list), in accordance with agreed criteria.
- design and establishment of a reporting procedure.
- establishment of a framework for a control scheme.
- promotion of compatible legal approaches to GFCM conservation and management measures among Members, including through further updating and expanding relevant aspects of the current study on the Comparative legal framework for fisheries management.
- regular evaluation of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) technical capacity at national level, especially with regard to improving reporting systems.
- analysis of the white and black vessel lists, and, on this basis further assessing the extent of IUU fishing by non GFCM Members in the Mediterranean.

21. To contribute implementing the above, the Workshop recommended that GFCM establish a Special Working group on IUU fishing. The Working group will, inter alia, undertake surveys as required and analyse their results, formulate preliminary recommendations for addressing, in a holistic manner, the various issues related to IUU fishing in the Mediterranean.

22. It was also recommended that the Commission:

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- mandate the Special Working Group on IUU fishing to formulate a medium-term regional project as a cooperative framework to support and coordinate activities related to combating IUU fishing activities in the Mediterranean.
  - provide further guidance on the institutional arrangements concerning the Special Working Group.
  - invite Members to formulate National Plans of Action on IUU Fishing and to implement them.

#### IV. MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

23. During its Twenty-eighth session, the Commission reviewed the progress achieved by the CAQ in implementing its programme of work for 2003. The Commission made no specific recommendations for the Committee but requested the Secretariat to consider undertaking an external evaluation of the whole activities of CAQ, in addition to SIPAM<sup>2</sup> (Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean), following the approach used in August 2003 for reviewing the achievements of SAC. The report of the Meeting of Expert on the External Evaluation of CAQ and its Networks (document GFCM/29/2005/Dma.4) was reviewed by the CAQ at its Fourth session (Alessandria, Egypt, June 2003). The Committee endorsed the conclusions and recommendations laid down in the report of the external evaluation.

24. CAQ thereby acknowledged that the main weaknesses of the Committee are related to:

- its current structure by which the activities of the Networks have mainly been possible only because of the contributions made by FAO, by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies – Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (CIHAEM-IAMZ) and by the Tunisian Government;
- the lack of clear terms of reference for CAQ itself and for the Networks;
- the absence of an autonomous budget and of secured national financial support by Members to promote GFCM aquaculture activities;
- limited inputs, especially data submission to SIPAM.

25. The Committee stressed in particular that CAQ should remain an independent entity from the SAC and that its role should be reinforced through a more precise mandate and an adequate share of the GFCM autonomous budget to support and direct the activities as well as to strengthen synergies, of and among, the Networks. The Committee further endorsed the following suggestions and/or recommendations, for each of the Network .

26. In relation to **SIPAM**, it recommended, *inter alia*, that:

- the SIPAM Coordination Committee should be disbanded and that its current duties should be assumed by the SIPAM Regional Center;
- the meeting of the National Coordinators should continue to be held on an annual basis;
- a clear operational structure, including the adoption of Terms of reference for the National Coordinators<sup>3</sup>, should be established and the National Coordinators should be endowed with an institutional mandate and provided with adequate budget at national level to carry out their activities;

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the terms of reference for the SIPAM National Coordinators have been prepared by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Committee. They are provided, with minor editorial changes, in document GFCM-XXIX-2005-8 for consideration by the Commission.

- focus be on strengthening the information already contained in SIPAM as opposed to developing new databases or increasing efforts for expanding the system to new members.
- an Information and Communication Officer be recruited to compensate the lack of expertise at the Regional Centre in communication and information building<sup>4</sup>.
- statistical aquaculture data reporting should be upgraded, especially for those countries which enjoy another coastline in addition to the Mediterranean and, the communication among data providers and data recipients should be improved and coordination enhanced to ensure the quality of data and statistics;
- in addition to providing financial support, GFCM should consider authorizing SIPAM to solicit other sources of funding.

27. In relation to **TECAM** (Technology and Aquaculture in the Mediterranean), **SELAM** (Socio-Economic and Legal Aspects of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean) and **EAM** (Environment and Aquaculture in the Mediterranean) networks, CAQ recommended that Members increase their support to these Networks by providing additional resources and by mobilizing the aquaculture institutions within their countries. The Committee also requested the Secretariat to draft Terms of reference for each of these Networks, including which contemplate the accommodation of ad hoc Working groups to tackle specific issues of strategic or regional importance. These should be submitted to the next CAQ Session.

28. CAQ further specifically recommended that:

- TECAM undertaken more analytical activities in response to CAQ priorities in addition to necessary training activities
- EAM be re-establishment. A first step would be to organize a meeting of experts to identify the main activities and work programme of this network<sup>5</sup>.

29. Furthermore, the Committee emphasized the need to renew efforts toward securing the involvement and participation of additional relevant national or international institutions and associations, in order to complement the limited resources that the CIHEAM and the FAO Fisheries Department can offer for the implementation of the activities of TECAM and SELAM. The Committee also identified, for endorsement by the Commission, the following issues as short-medium term priorities in the programme of work of TECAM and SELAM: (i) bio-indicators for sustainable Mediterranean aquaculture; (ii) finfish diversification; (ii) offshore mariculture; (iii) recirculation systems for new species; (iv) traceability of aquaculture products; and (v) interactions between capture fisheries and aquaculture.

30. In conjunction with the preparation of a revised regional aquaculture project proposal, originally drafted following the Consultation on the Application of Article 9 of the FAO Code of conduct for Responsible Fisheries in the Mediterranean, the Committee noted that the differences and priorities throughout the region make it difficult to endorse a single project that could be acceptable by all Members as well as attract donor support. CAQ therefore suggested to split priorities, differentiating issues of regional interest from those specific to a subregion. Identified priority activities would thus constitute components of the CAQ short- and medium-term programme for consideration by the Commission., as follows:

- priority issues of regional interest were identified as follows: a) access to a common market; b) development of regional common/standard regulations (e.g. traceability, food safety) taking

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<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that at its 2004 Extraordinary session, the Commission agreed that funds should be dedicated in priority to the strengthening of SIPAM and the autonomous budget for 2005 earmarked a specific amount for the recruitment of such officer<sup>4</sup> (GFCM/29/2005/Inf.5).

<sup>5</sup> Paragraph 54 and 65 of the Fourth Session of the Committee.

into consideration existing EU regulations; c) adoption of a guaranteed safety and quality level for the Mediterranean aquaculture products throughout the region; d) promotion of the image of regional aquaculture production; e) improvement of knowledge on the biology of the bluefin tuna; and f) seminars and workshops to facilitate assessments and consideration by countries.

- preliminary priority activities of sub-regional concern included a further developing marine aquaculture in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region through establishing cooperative projects, carrying out preliminary feasibility studies to be funded by the GFCM autonomous for establish an on-the-job training centre in the El Arish area (Sinai, Egypt), a pilot feed mill in Morocco and a regional centre for bluefin tuna reproduction in Tunisia.

31. The Committee also agreed that priority should be given to issues related to the interaction between capture fisheries and aquaculture. It recommended that the methodology identified by the AdriaMed Expert Consultation be extended to the overall Mediterranean with emphasis put on: biodiversity, restocking, space competition, marketing and the role of local fishing communities. The support of the FAO regional projects on this issue was sought.

32. The Committee also invited the Commission to consider the establishment of a post for an Aquaculture Expert in the new GFCM Secretariat<sup>6</sup>. It should however be recalled that GFCM, at its Extraordinary Session in 2004, decided to freeze the proposed post of Aquaculture Expert and to rely upon consultancies at present<sup>7</sup>.

## **V. SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**

33. The Commission is invited to review the advice and recommendations emanating from its subsidiary bodies and to take decision accordingly.

34. The Commission may wish to provide guidance on priority activities and related institutional framework as a follow-up to the GFCM Workshop on IUU fishing in the Mediterranean.

35. The Commission may also wish to consider the Recommendations of relevance for the Mediterranean which have been adopted by ICCAT in 2004.

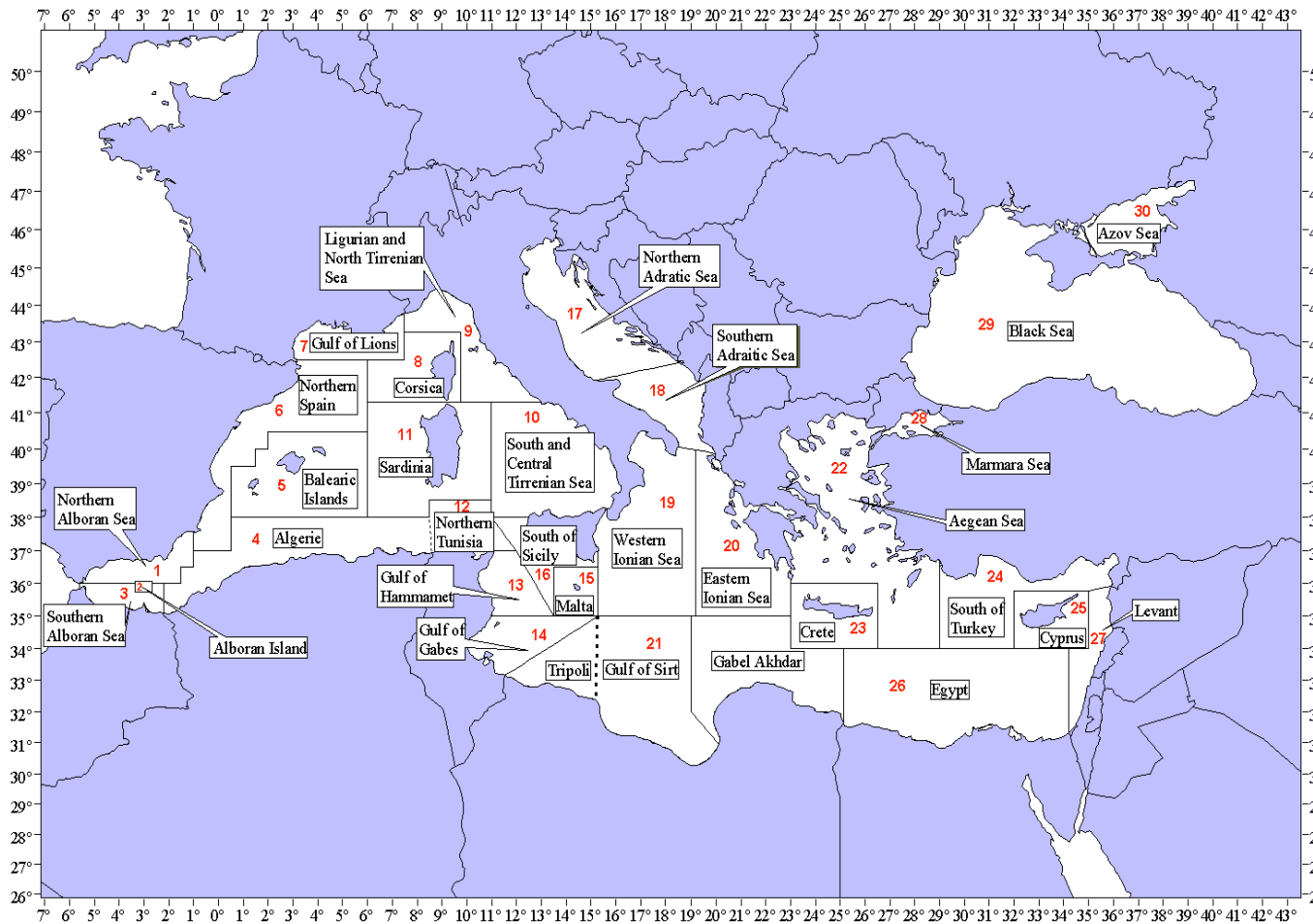
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<sup>6</sup> Paragraph 69 of the Fourth Session of the Committee.

<sup>7</sup> Paragraph 29 of the Extraordinary Session.

## ANNEX 1.

## GFCM Geographic Sub-areas (Athens, June 2001)



1. Northern Alboran Sea
2. Alboran Island
3. Southern Alboran Sea
4. Algeria
5. Balearic Islands
6. Northern Spain
7. Gulf of Lions
8. Corsica Island
9. Ligurian and North Tirrenian Sea
10. South Tiffenian Sea
11. Sardinia
12. Northern Tunisia
13. Gulf of Hammamet
14. Gulf of Gabes
15. Malta Island
16. South of Sicily
17. Northern Adriatic
18. Southern Adriatic Sea
19. Western Ionian Sea
20. Eastern Ionian Sea
21. Libya
22. Aegean Sea
23. Crete Island
24. South of Turkey
25. Cyprus Island
26. Egypt
27. Levant
28. Marmara Sea
29. Black Sea
30. Azov Sea