



GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION
FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN
COMMISSION GÉNÉRALE DES PÊCHES
POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE



GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

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PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD 2006

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) work programme includes a number of activities that must be carried out: by the Members, at national level, by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), the Committee of Aquaculture (CAQ) and their subsidiary bodies, and, as required, by the Secretariat. The provisional work programme for the SAC 2006 intersession period was identified during the Eighth session of SAC, in October 2005. The programme of work of CAQ for the 2005-2006 intersession period was approved by the GFCM during its 28th session¹.

2. This document deals only with activities of the Committees of GFCM. It is however noteworthy that the programme of CAQ only covers six months of the year 2006, that is until the 5th Session of the Committee, scheduled to be held in Spain in June 2006. On this occasion, CAQ will identify a new work programme for its 2006-2007 intersession period. The funds earmarked in the 2005 autonomous budget for CAQ activities until June 2006 could thus be considered as engaged against the 2005 budgetary exercise. In line with the provision of Article VIII (3) of the GFCM Agreement, it would be advisable to forecast in the budget for the year 2006 (document GFCM:XXX/2006/7) some of the key activities and meetings of CAQ that may need to be implemented before the 31st session of the Commission.

II. PROVISIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

3. The Committee referred to the annual "Reference framework for the mandate of SAC", as defined by the 27th session of the Commission and updated during the following sessions. It noted the need for it to be reformulated, in order to reinforce the coherence and the integration of planned activities. The Committee also underlined the importance of strengthening progress throughout 2006,

¹ Paragraph 96 of the Report of the 29th session (document GFCM/XXX/2006/Inf.4.).

in particular on the Operational Units, the establishment of the GFCM central data bases, including the vessel register, and on the reinforcement of the multidisciplinary and transversal activities of the Sub-Committees.

4. The provisional work programme for 2006, based on the priority activities and the relative meetings identified by SAC are summarised below for each of the subsidiary body of the Committee.

Sub-Committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA)

5. Based on the general directions presented by the SAC to the Sub-committee in 2003, the Committee has agreed on the following priorities:

- Testing the biological indicators and reference points on operational units and analysing the results through convening a SCSI/SCSA transversal meeting;
- Pursuing the mapping of the distribution of juveniles for priority species;
- Monitoring stocks assessed in 2004 and 2005 and assessing the state of all other shared stocks, and multispecies fisheries as well as fisheries targeting priority species;
- Conducting pilot tests on the application of non-conventional models of monitoring and assessing multispecies fisheries in selected GSAs, including the Black Sea, with the incorporation of ecosystem considerations (e.g. predator/prey considerations);
- Producing a reference document on the impact of selected fishing gear on the environment in order to promote the implementation of corrective measures;
- Promoting the establishment of a network of Mediterranean technologists, including from industry and collecting information and establishing a databank on gear selectivity, using the agreed format;
- Formulating a practical guide on standardization of methods regarding selectivity studies on Mediterranean trawls;
- Convening a meeting of the Permanent working group on stock assessment methodologies (PWGAM) in line with agreed Terms of reference, in early 2006.

Sub-Committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems (SCMEE)

6. The Committee recalled that during previous sessions, the Sub-Committee was requested to present tabular information on incidental catches of protected species and by-catches in the fishing of large pelagic sharks; complete work on the mapping of essential fish habitats; report outputs of research on driftnets, including data in tabular form. The Committee confirmed the above-mentioned priorities, and further agreed on new activities as follows:

- Undertaking interdisciplinary pilot studies for identifying and applying the principles of the ecosystem approach on the management of shared stocks at the subregional level, and testing, in doing so, the ecological indicators for the spatio-temporal monitoring of fishing effort;
- Continuing to investigate and formulate a structured programme of research on species living at depths greater than 1 000 metres;
- Extending analyses on the impact of driftnets on protected or endangered species to the whole Mediterranean;
- Pursuing coordination with projects on the monitoring and control of the impact of fishing on protected or endangered species, including with a view to enhancing such coordination; and
- Addressing together with ACCOBAMS the issue of the interactions between cetacean species in fishery activities through possibly convening a joint workshop on the subject.

Sub-Committee on Statistics and Information (SCSI)

7. Taking note of the outputs and suggestions of SCSI, the Committee agreed on its priorities as follows:

- Continuing the identification and extension of studies on operational units to all GSAs, with a priority to those having shared stocks and priority species, and holding a transversal SCSI/SCSA workshop on the implementation of Operational Units concept in stock assessment;
- Organizing a workshop dedicated to fishing effort measurement standardization and a workshop on Operational Units;
- Preparing a manual on minimum data collection requirements for fisheries management, using available information and literature;
- Finalizing, with the support of the MedFisis project, the framework of fleet data for the operational units and ensuring the compilation and storage of available relevant national data and their input into the GFCM databank;
- Formatting and storing in the GFCM databank information needed by the Commission, including those available from the FAO regional projects, FAO/FIDI and other programmes;
- Compiling a list of national databases on fisheries;
- Collecting, jointly with MedFisis, data on the registration of vessels longer than 15 metres authorized to fish (white list) as well as relevant data on shorter vessels.

Sub-Committee on Economic and Social Sciences (SCESS)

8. Taking into consideration the SCESS outputs and suggestions made in 2005, the Committee agreed on SCESS priorities as follows:

- To organize a technical workshop on the use of socio-economic indicators in fisheries management;
- To apply the "traffic light" approach to analyse socio-economic indicator trends in shared fisheries for which the SCSA had recommended a freeze on fishing effort and at the same time testing reference point values;
- To continue the collection and analysis of data on indicators to cover all the GSAs and to organize a workshop in the use of these indicators in fisheries management;
- To draw up a minimal list of social indicators, taking into account the methodology identified by the AdriaMed project, to analyse their compatibility and to test their use on relevant operational units;
- To further analyse national legislative frameworks to assist in the harmonization of laws relating to access regimes to fisheries resources, management of fishing effort and fishing capacity, and monitoring, control and surveillance;
- To further study the legislative and socio-economic aspects of recreational fisheries; and
- To extend analyses of the impact of national and regional market forces (including supply and demand, prices, quality control) on the fishing industry and on the management of the fisheries concerned.

Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagics

9. The Committee suggested to:

- Collect all the data available on fishing and biology of swordfish in order to identify technical management measures, and in particular to address the following issues: stocks structure, ecosystemic approaches to the swordfish fisheries, socio-economic aspects of fishing, fleet statistics, while possibly using the operational unit format for fleet data;

- Organize a meeting of the joint GFCM/ICCAT Working group accordingly, subject to ICCAT availability.

Meetings of SAC and its subsidiary bodies

10. The Scientific Advisory Committee suggested convening the meetings hereafter in 2006. The dates and the places of these meetings will be communicated at the appropriate time and as members indicate their availability to host meetings.

Meeting	Venue/Date
Ninth session of the SAC	Rome /end October
Session of the SCSA, including: Working Group on Demersal Species; Working Group on Small Pelagic Species	Rome /early September
Session of the SCESS	Rome /early September
Session of the SCSA, including the Transversal Working Group on Operational Units	Rome /early September
Session of the SCMEP including the workshop on interaction between Cetacean and fishing activities	Rome /early September
CMSC	TBD/TBD
SCESS Workshop on the Use of Socio-Economic Indicators for Fisheries Management	TBD/ TBD
SCSA/SCSA transversal Workshop on stock assessment and Operational Units (application of the biological indicators and the reference points to the operational Units)	TBD/ TBD
SCSA Workshop on fishing effort measurement standardisation	TBD/ TBD
First SCSA Permanent Working Group on Stock Assessment Methodologies	Istanbul/8-10 March 2006

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE AQUACULTURE FOR 2006

11. During its Fourth session, the Committee on Aquaculture identified the following short and long term priorities at regional scale: a) access to a common market; b) elaboration of common regulation (traceability, health security) taking into consideration pertinent UE regulations; c) adoption of a sanitary security and a quality warrantee for the aquaculture products of the Mediterranean; d) promotion of the image of the regional aquaculture production; e) improvement in the knowledge of the biology of the bluefin Tuna (reproduction, etc.); and f) seminars and workshops aiming at promoting countries evaluations and reviews.

12. For the intersessional period 2004-2006, the programme of work suggested by CAQ, as endorsed by GFCM, included primarily the "transversal" activities concerning the three networks, some specific activities, in particular for the revitalization of SIPAM (Information systems for the promotion of the aquaculture in the Mediterranean), and training courses in relation to the SELAM (socio-economic and legal Aspects of the aquaculture in the Mediterranean) and TECAM

(Technology and aquaculture in the Mediterranean) networks respectively, as well as a Meeting of experts for the re-establishment of network EAM (Environment and aquaculture) and the finalization of the technical guidelines on sustainable Bluefin tuna farming practices in the Mediterranean.

13. The Document GFCM/XXX/2006/2 gives information on the activities carried out in 2005. The activities being prepared, by or in coordination with the Secretariat, in the sight of their execution during the first semester of 2006, are as follows:

- Workshop on Sustainability indicators for Aquaculture in the Mediterranean;
- Global trend assessments of Mediterranean aquaculture, including a prospective analysis for some species on the basis of SIPAM data;
- SIPAM/SELAM workshop on the market analysis of Seabass and Seabream in the Mediterranean;
- Implementation of the first phase of the plan of revitalization of SIPAM, as specified in appendix G of document GFCM/XXX/2006/Inf.13;
- TECAM/SELAM courses and seminars, organized by the CIHEAM/IAMZ;
- Fifth session of the Committee.

14. Thus, the EAM workshop on the management of coastal lagoons and their interaction with artisanal fishing and the second phase of the plan of revitalization of SIPAM, initially scheduled to take place in 2005, will need to be postponed to the second half of 2006. Training activities by CIHEAM/IAMZ would need to be taken into account. Finally, it will be necessary to consider the implementation of some of the activities identified by the Meeting of experts on the re-establishment of the EAM (document GFCM/XXX/2006/Inf.14).

15. Consequently, the Secretariat suggests, for examination by the Commission, to consider the implementation of the following activities during the second semester of 2006:

- Meeting of experts for the establishment of a subsidiary body of CAQ covering marketing and industry related issues, in replacement of the TECAM and SELAM networks;
- Ninth annual meeting of the SIPAM;
- Identification and processing of information on the interactions aquaculture-environment;
- First meeting of EAM (as a subsidiary body of CAQ), including a meeting of its Working group on the integration of aquaculture in coastal zone management and the above mentioned workshop on coastal lagoons management and their interaction with artisanal fisheries;
- Comparative analysis of aquaculture legislations in Mediterranean countries, in collaboration with the FAO/FIRI NALO programme.

16. It is thus suggested considering the organization of the following meetings of the CAQ in 2006. The dates and the venues of these meetings will be communicated at the appropriate time and as Members indicate their availability to host some of them.

Meeting	Date and venue
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Workshop on Sustainability indicators for Aquaculture	5-6 April/Montpellier (France)
TECAM course on aquaculture and the management of the environment	24-29 April/Murcia (Spain)
Joint SIPAM/SELAM meeting on market analysis of the seabass and seabream	Mid-May/Florence (Italy)
Course of the TECAM on the mariculture of algae: techniques, use and development prospect.	22-23 May/Saragosse (Spain)
Fifth session of the Committee on aquaculture	June 2006/Saint Jacques de Compostelle (Spain)
Meeting of experts for the establishment of a CAQ subsidiary body on marketing and aquaculture industry	TBD/Rome (Italy)
SIPAM Annual meeting	September / Cyprus or Lebanon
EAM meeting, including Working group on aquaculture and coastal zone management and Workshop on coastal lagoons management and their interaction with the artisanal fisheries	TBD/Italy

17. In addition to the meetings of SAC and CAQ, above, it will also be necessary to schedule the 31st session of the Commission, preferably at the end of 2006. It will also be advisable to make sure that the program of work which might be adopted by the Commission on the basis of activities of its subsidiary bodies, remains coherent with the 2006 forecast of expenditures for the autonomous budget, or, that the programme be supplemented by other sources, as appropriate.

IV. SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

18. The Commission is invited to review the activities and meetings proposed by its Scientific Advisory Committee for 2006. The Commission is also invited to confirm the activities envisaged until June 2006 for its Committee on Aquaculture and consider the preliminary suggestions for activities to be implemented during the second half of 2006.

19. The Commission may wish to take relevant decisions on these matters, including specifying priority activities and identifying complementary source of financing, as deemed necessary.

20. In so doing, GFCM may consider the budgetary implications of its programme of work and provide the Secretariat with supplementary guidance on budget implementation.