

April 2008



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



GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Eleventh Session

Morocco, 1-5 December 2008

**REPORT OF THE COORDINATING MEETING
OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES (CMSC)
(11th March 2008)**

OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), and of the Coordinating Meeting of the Sub-Committees (CMSC), Mr. Henri Farrugio, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants (list in Appendix B). He highlighted the importance of the items suggested in the Agenda (Appendix A) of the Meeting and gave the floor to Mr Alain Bonzon, Executive Secretary who welcomed the participants and explained that the meeting was aimed to fine tune the 2008 workplan of the Committee, translate it in operative actions, and identify course of action to respond to some specific Commission's requests made during last session (e.g.: log book and fleet capacity matters). He added that this meeting will be also devoted to identify inputs from regional projects.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2008 WORKPLAN OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES

2. The CMSC recalled that priority activities should be more clearly identified by each Sub-Committee, including through better identifying actions intended for approval by the Committee from those strictly concerning tools used by the concerned Sub-Committee to implement its work. The meeting further reviewed and discussed in particular the elements of the 2008 workplan as adopted by SAC at its Tenth Session (October 2007) and approved by the Commission at its 32nd

Session (February 2008). Hereafter are summarised the discussions and decisions for each Sub-Committee:

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

3. The meeting stressed that the General frame for the gathering and storing of multidisciplinary scientific data in the Mediterranean could be based on the Fishery Ecosystem Information System (FEIS) developed by the MedSudMed project and operating on three levels: a) Inventory of all surveys; b) Characteristics of the surveys and c) Disaggregated data. It was expected that only the 2 first levels would be of use for GFCM needs.

4. Regarding the organisation of the Workshop on Fleet register (Rome, 12-15 May 2008), the meeting reviewed and confirmed the related Terms of Reference and acknowledged that :

- the ToR referring to the tool for monitoring capacity was a central point to be considered during the workshop discussion.
- the authorised vessel list would be a subset of the Med Fleet Register. The European Community has already implemented such a Fleet Register database and the experience gained should be discussed during the meeting.

5. The Coordinating meeting addressed the issue concerning the implementation of GFCM Task 1 statistical matrix. It was recalled that the Commission, during its 32nd Session, reemphasised the importance of Resolution GFCM/31/2007/1 and the urgent need to submit the related data in advance of the SAC sub-committee meetings. In order to ensure follow up to the Resolution, a letter will be circulated by the Secretariat to the Heads of Delegations for recalling this requirement, while the SCSI Coordinator, in collaboration with the GFCM Secretariat, will liaise with the SCSI focal points to prepare the ground at the field level.

6. It was underlined that FAO regional projects operating in the Mediterranean should relate to the Task 1 format in data collection and compilation initiatives. This would ensure the consistency of the approaches and maximise the benefits from projects.

7. The GFCM Executive Secretary referred to the paragraphs 84 and 85 of the report of the GFCM 32nd Session regarding the Pomo Pit/Jabuka area in the Adriatic and the role played by AdriaMed project in gathering scientific data and information on this vulnerable marine ecosystem. He also recalled the EC intervention underlining “*the need that the related scientific information and analysis available be channelled through the SAC for its consideration by the Commission*”.

8. With regard to the preparation of the SCSI Session scheduled to be held in October 2008, the meeting discussed the topics to be addressed during this session as follows :

- Task 1

- Standardise the measurement of fishing effort: a compromise must be found between the pragmatic approach which would lead to collecting the data before standardising the methods, and the recommendation clearly spelt out by the Commission.(recommendation GFCM/30/2006/1 on management of certain fisheries exploiting demersal and small pelagics);

- Segmentation of the fleet: transversal meeting is planned back-to-back with the next SCSI meeting.
- New GSA compatible STATLANT 37A form: a form has already been elaborated and must be further discussed. In this respect, the strengthening of an official channel to gather landings information is essential in order to avoid initiatives which would unduly duplicate and overlap the workload. It was also recalled that the STATLANT has a long history, and despite discrepancies which make it difficult to use, the maintenance of the historical datasets should be secured when making the necessary adjustments.
- Standardised formats for the GFCM logbook: the request from the Commission regarding the establishment of a GFCM logbook was discussed. The CMSC expressed the following views:
 - The SCSI will identify the essential information to be provided through implementing a regional logbooks system, to be used in the GFCM area, with the priority to the parameters necessary to feed the Task 1 statistical matrix, with accordance to the Resolution GFCM/31/2007/1. This information will be considered for updating the logbooks currently used by some member countries or for establishing new national logbooks where this system is not in force.

9. For future actions, the meeting expressed the need to initiate discussions on the methodological aspects related to gathering information on small-scale fisheries. Extensive work and research projects have been carried out in the Mediterranean and they should be reviewed as a first step.

- Expected inputs from the regional project to SCSI activities

10. The expected inputs from the regional projects were identified as the following:

- AdriaMed

- Promote the update of the national fisheries databases produced so far by the Project.
- Establish cooperation with the SCSI for the formatting and storing of relevant information available in the AdriaMed data bases;
- Facilitate the SCSI to develop MEDSTAT within relevant countries.

- MedSudMed

- Provide support for the development of the FEIS at a wider geographical scale, so that it is put at the disposal of all the national and regional scientific institutions of the GFCM, as agreed during the last Coordination Committee meeting.
- Support the implementation of a multidisciplinary pilot study on Operational Units related to the Octopus fisheries.

- CopeMed

- takes initiative to promote FEIS within its participating countries subject to confirmation by the first project (phase II) coordination meeting.

- MedFisis

- assist countries in developing data collection systems and databases with particular attention to the fleet register;
- Facilitate the SCSI to develop MEDSTAT within relevant countries.

- **Sub-Committee on Stock Assessment**

11. The SCSA Coordinator summarized the main activities regarding the workplan for 2008 and emphasized the following:

- The joint assessments of hake and associated species and of small pelagics, which have been scheduled to be convened during the WGs (Izmir, Turkey, 15-19 Sept. 2008);
- The training courses on production models and tuning VPA (Cairo, Egypt, 2-6 June 2008).
- The use of data coming from surveys at sea (trawl surveys, echo surveys, ichthyoplankton surveys) in order to produce assessments (2nd meeting of the WG on methodology; and
- The update of the list of the priority species and shared stocks. For the last task, the coordinator reminded the criteria agreed upon during the SCSA as endorsed by SAC, while the support by the sub-regional projects was tentatively requested.

12. The Coordinator then presented a detailed table with the SCSA activities for the intersessional period 2007 and 2008, including for discussing activities still pending since 2007. She informed that for improving the assessment forms, the inclusion of direct methods into these forms has been scheduled for 2008. Regarding the standardization of echo/ichthyoplankton surveys, she mentioned that this activity has been completed in 2007 in the Adriatic and MedsudMed area and she stressed the need for its extension to other GSAs. The participants were informed on the implementation of the project “EU Mediterranean Coordinated Survey on Small Pelagics – MEDIAS”, which has a similar task and whose results will be presented to the SCSA 2008 Session through the facilitator of the Working Group on small pelagics who is member of the steering committee of this project and acts as a link between GFCM and EU.

13. Referring to the issue of Indicators/Reference Points, the meeting was informed that there was no contribution in 2007. However a similar meeting has already been convened by the EC (Livorno, 21-22 January 2008) and its report should be considered a helpful guide for addressing this issue in 2008.

14. During the discussion which followed, it was stressed that up to now and despite the various on-going projects on trawl surveys (mainly MEDITS), no direct assessments have ever been presented in the respective Working Groups of SCSA. It was also noted that during 2008, the EC will organize 4 Working Groups under the STECF on the use of data coming from the “Data Collection” programmes for assessing the state of stocks and it was highlighted the need of those results to be presented in the respective WGs of SCSA.

- Expected inputs from the regional projects

- AdriaMed:

- Starts the testing phase of the use of the criteria defined for the identification of a list of priority species by compiling a tentative list for GSA 17 and GSA 18;

- Provide support to the assessment of hake stock (*Merluccius merluccius*) and associated species, in GSA 17 and GSA 18 within the SCSA Working Group on demersal species;
- Continue to provide support for the standardization of echo-surveys in GSA 17 and GSA 18.

- *MedSudMed*

- Inform the SCSA Working Group on demersal species on the progress of the study on *Octopus vulgaris* in GSA 14 to be undertaken by the INSTM-Tunisia with the support of the MedSudMed Project One of the objectives is to delineate the stock in the area of the Gulf of Gabes-Lampedusa where an important fishery occurs.
- report on discussions and suggestions for the update of the list of priority species and shared stocks.
- promote and support (together with AdriaMed) the participation in the training course on methodologies for stock assessment covering tuning VPA and Production models.

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

15. The Coordinator introduced the activities to be performed by SCMEE in 2008, by thematic action, which are summarized below including with CMSC comments :

- *Promote the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF)*

16. The Coordinator recalled that there are still challenges in terms of sharing a common understanding of the principles and the actual application of EAF. He underlined the need for training initiatives that could lead to both sensitizing and familiarizing stakeholders, at all levels (fishermen, managers, scientists, decision makers, NGOs, etc), in concepts, principles and implementation of EAF. The Sub-Committee will have to identify the relevant actions to be performed in this context and to identify the appropriate ways to take benefit of the support which could be provided by FAO/GFCM and other organizations in the implementation of the case studies (e.g: GEFMed project). He recalled the need to implement field case studies on EAF in selected countries/areas where it will be possible to carry out these studies .

17. He also recalled the following 2007 pending issues:

- work on indicators, (addressed to the 4 Sub- Committees): no specific actions reported by national scientist;
- test and discuss the use of the two ecological indicators (%PPR-TLc and synthetic trend indicator (MEDITS)) (addressed to SCMEE and SCSA): no specific actions reported by national scientists;
- review and consolidate information and classification of bottom habitats (addressed to SCMEE): RAC/SPA is producing a complete classification of benthic habitats;
- improve knowledge on and characterization of essential fish habitats: some progress on the

identification of some essential fish habitat;

- promote ecosystem considerations in assessments (addressed to SCSA): some progress on specific aspects.

- Deep Sea, sensitive habitat and Marine protected Areas (MPAs)

18. The CMSC commented related actions as follows:

- Devise elements for the identification of sensitive habitats of interest for priority species by GSAs: need to better specify the requirement which seems to be connected to the selection of criteria to identify sensitive habitats of interest for priority species by GSA. The coordinator suggested that a working document be prepared by the SCMEE experts (or by a consultant) and submitted to the Sub-Committee Session;
- Definition of “deep sea” taking into account the specific characteristics of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: a preliminary work will be done by the SCMEE through an electronic network and will be submitted to next Session of the Sub-Committee;
- Harmonize terminology and categories of MPAs and assess the weakness of the representativity of the Mediterranean MPA, as for the habitats covered: a preliminary work will be done by the SCMEE through an electronic network and will be submitted to next Session of the Sub-Committee; .
- initiate studies on the efficiency of fishing restricted area (FRAs) and the conservation of biodiversity: the Coordinator suggested that a working document be prepared by the SCMEE experts (or by a consultant) and submitted to the SCMEE Session.

- Selectivity issues

19. The progress made in the framework of ATSELMED 2 and the preparation of the draft Terms of Reference for ATSELEMD 3 scheduled to be held in France (1-3 July 2008) were reviewed and endorsed by the meeting. The main actions still to be performed were recalled as follows:

- perform analysis of physical impact of the fishing gears on the sea bed and sensitive habitat with a particular attention for continental slope bottom and sub-marine meadows: SCMEE, in collaboration with SCSA and SCESS, was invited to identify a strategy of implementation;
- Elaborate protocol for the standardization of selectivity studies, including for technological, biological, ecosystem and economic aspects and devise steps for implementing the 40 mm square mesh cod-end. The study should be carried out as appropriate under the framework of regional projects and initiatives: the SCMEE, in collaboration with SCSA and SCESS, was invited to identify a strategy for implementation;

- develop studies on technical aspects to be considered in selectivity studies such as: i) effect on discards; ii) survival of escapees (estimation of unaccounted mortality); iii) effect of the type of netting material and mounting and iv) effects on the ecosystem

- By catch/incidental catches and interaction between fisheries and Cetacean

20. The Coordinator recalled that the two actions below were scheduled to be developed by the Working Group on By catch (in collaboration with Accobams):

- ensure follow up of the small-scale projects being implemented or proposed in the framework of BycBAMS (ACCOBAMS) activities in selected Mediterranean countries;
- As follow up to the SAC recommendation on the collection of information related to the interaction between fishing activities and some threatened/protected species (e.g: Cetacean, Sea bird, turtles..), it was suggested to elaborate and to disseminate a new version of the questionnaires elaborated last year only for Cetacean. It was suggestec to designate a responsible expert to contact scientists, institutions and organisations and to promote the questionnaire.

- Expected inputs from the regional project

- GEFMed

- Once launched, some activities on EAF foreseen in this frame could be of direct support to SCMEE

- MedSudMed

- Upon request/proposal of the INSTM and with the support of the MedSudMed Project, it is planned to carry out a pilot exercise in GSA 12 on the feasibility of the implementation of EAF.

• **Sub-Committee on Economic and Social Sciences**

21. The Coordinator recalled the main objective which is to provide useful information and support to managers, to facilitate agreements on fishing effort management. He underlined that, at this moment, the basic task to assure this suppose to have an adequate information for all Mediterranean and Black Sea countries by ensuring, in collaboration with the SCSI, the collection of basic data on: a)- Employment and b)- Fleet Register by Fleet segments.

22. He pointed out the need to improve the communication with the focal points to enlarge the national expert participation in the work program. He presented the SCEES priorities for the intersessional period as follows:

- Assess socio-economic impacts of implementing the 40mm square mesh size in trawl fisheries; and implement selectivity impact analysis in selected countries. The following actions were suggested:
 - establish an electronic network to collect any information on this matter inside and outside of the Mediterranean;
 - promote the use of bio-economic models as MEFISTO devoted to this problem;
 - promote active participation to ATSELMED 3 (France, 1-3 July);
 - Include in the SCESS Session a specific agenda item to evaluate the outcomes of the workshop and provide related conclusions.

- Study the role of incentive structures and mechanisms in national fisheries. It is suggested to:
 - collect any information on this matter at theoretical level, especially from institutions such as OECD and UNEP, and made available their works in the website
 - include in the SCESS Session a specific agenda item to analyse the dimension of this problem in the Mediterranean and analyse what are the main economic incentives in their fisheries and their impact.

- Produce and compile socio-economic data on recreational fisheries by performing the following actions:
 - develop collection of socio-economic data on recreational fisheries in the area. ;
 - prepare a technical guidelines on the management of recreational fisheries;
 - develop studies in this field in collaboration with the regional projects;

- Promote the use of socioeconomic indicators in fisheries management. The following actions are suggested:
 - elaborate a guidebook on the use of indicators in fisheries management: a document of reference is in progress;
 - publish the final version of the COPEMED study on socio-economic indicators
 - develop studies in this field in collaboration with the regional projects.

- Expected inputs from the regional project

- *AdriaMed*

- collection of data on recreational fisheries in the Adriatic Sea;
- organize a workshop on socio economic data for fisheries management in order to define a common framework in the Adriatic in particular for the collection of some socio economic parameters.
- Economic and social information will continue to be collected with the support of the Adriamed Project in Montenegro, applying the Operational Unit concept.

- *MedSudMed*

- In the framework of the study on *Octopus vulgaris* carried out by the INSTM with the support of the MedSudMed Project, it is foreseen to collect and/or update socio-economic data related to the octopus fishery in the Gulf of Gabes.

The FAO regional projects staff expressed their views in accordance with the overall objective of the projects and of the final agreement of their respective Coordination Committee regarding the preliminary SAC workplan and their expected inputs to the 2008 activities. As for the previous years, whenever requested by the countries and depending on budget availability, both Projects will support the participation of national scientists in training courses and working groups organized by the Sub-Committees.

23. The Coordinator of CopeMed underlined that the project will be able to better identify its inputs to SAC activities after the first steering Committee/inception meeting which is being prepared.

- **2008 Meetings**

24. The CMSC reviewed the SAC meetings for 2008 with the aim to adjust the date and venue for some of them, in accordance with the Commission's decision requiring optimization of intersessional meetings and taking into consideration the requirement to ensure the best conditions for the success of meetings. The list of meetings was finalised according to the above mentioned considerations (Annex C).

REQUESTS FROM THE COMMISSION

25. The Chairperson of SAC informed about two specific requests from the Commissions namely a)- Socio-economic and other implications related to the management of fishing capacity in the GFCM Area¹ and b)- Technical aspects concerning the recording of catch by fishing vessels in the GFCM area².

26. These matters were extensively discussed by the meeting which charged SCSi to ensure follow up according the indications given in the paragraph 7 to this report

ISSUES RELATED TO THE ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS

- **Transversal activities/sessions**

¹ Extract of the draft report: "While welcoming in principle the substance of the proposed Recommendation (*on management of fishing capacity in the GFCM Area*), It was noted that this proposal had been received during the session, thereby not allowing the possibility to examine its implications and that it was hardly related to robust scientific evidence. It was therefore decided, that SAC should review, during its forthcoming session, the socio-economic and other implications related to this proposal."

² Extract of the draft report: "The Commission decided that SAC should review the technical aspects related to this proposal (*on recording of catch by fishing vessels in the GFCM area*) and provide the Commission with the appropriate elements in order to adopt a Recommendation on a GFCM logbook, possibly at the next session of the Commission"

27. The efficiency of the transversal meeting held during last Sub-committee sessions was again discussed and its importance for the Sub-Committees joint discussions on multidisciplinary topics was recalled. The CMSC also discussed the ways to better clarify the objectives and the mechanisms of this session to ensure a better added value for the Sub-Committees achievements.

28. The CMSC suggested that transversal Working Groups and Workshops should, possibly, direct their conclusions and suggestions specifically to each Sub-Committee, as relevant, through specifying follow-up action needed. It was further suggested that the transversal session (a half day) be the opportunity to require specific comments from the associated Sub-Committees and that reporting on this joint session be ensured by the Sub-Committee who is the lead of the transversal issue under discussion. It was suggested that results of this joint discussion be only reported in the report of the Sub-Committee-lead. The meeting also agreed to maintain open the discussion on this matter for an eventual future improvement, if deemed necessary.

- **Reports and executive summarises**

29. According to the Commission's decision to avoid duplication of documents between the SAC Session and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies, the CMSC suggested that the coordinators ensure that rapporteur (s) be appointed for each meeting and that the report of the each meeting will be adopted together with an executive summary. This executive summary, to be supervised by the Sub-Committee coordinator, should focus on the key aspects and issues (in very summarised manner) to be submitted for consideration to SAC (main conclusions, scientific advice and suggested workplan).

ANY OTHER MATTER

30. The report of the meeting was adopted by e-mail on 15 April 2008 .

Agenda

- 1. Opening and arrangement of the meeting**
- 2. Implementation of the 2008 workplan of the Sub-Committees including planning of activities: SCSA-SCSI-SCESS-SCMEE**
 - Review of the activities/actions adopted during the 32nd Session (as well as some relevant pending activities from recent years);
 - Review and planning of meetings and training courses including the review of related Terms of reference, mandate or programme;
 - Expected inputs from regional projects.
- 3. Requests from the Commission**
 - Socio-economic and other implications related to the management of fishing capacity in the GFCM Area;
 - Technical aspects concerning the recording of catch by fishing vessels in the GFCM area.
- 4. Issues related to the organization of meetings**
 - Transversal activities/sessions;
 - Preparation of the reports and executive summaries
- 5. Any other matter**

List of participants

SAC Chairperson/Coordinators:

Henri Farruggio : Chairperson of SAC

Constantina Karlou-Riga : SCSA coordinator

M. Nejemeedine Bradai : SCMEE coordinator

Joel Vigneau : SCSA coordinator

Ramon Franquesa : SCESS coordinator

FAO/GFCM Secretariat

Alain Bonzon : GFCM Executive Secretary

Abdellah Srouf : GFCM Deputy Executive Secretary

Matthew Camilleri : GFCM Biostatistician

Federico DeRossi : GFCM Data Management Consultant

Fabio Massa : Coordinator of AdriaMed and MedsudMed projects

J. Antonio Caminas : Coordinator of CopeMed project

Jordi Leonard : FAO Fishery Resources Officer

J. Jacques Maguire : FAO Consultant

Rino Coppola : FAO Consultant (Statistics)

Tarub Tarub : MedsudMed Fishery Monitoring Expert

Nicoletta Milone : AdriaMed Fisheries Information Officer

List of meetings for 2008

Meetings	Place/Date
SCSI Ad Hoc Workshop on regional fleet register	Rome/12-14 May 2008
2nd Working Group on Stock Assessment Methodologies , on basic methods and protocols to undertake assessments with direct methods	Libya/ 2-4 June 2008
8th session of the Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on large pelagic species	Malaga, Spain/5-9 May 2008
SCSA Training courses on methodologies for stock assessment	Cairo, Egypt/ 23-27 June 2008
SCMEE/SCSA/SCESS Transversal Working Group on selectivity	Sete, French/2-4 July 2008
SCMEE/SCSA transversal Working Group on by catch/incidental catches	Rome / 15-16 September 2008
SCMEE meeting of ByCBAMS project (jointly with ACCOBAMS)	Rome, Italy/17-18 September 2008.
SCSA Working Group on Demersal Species , including joint stocks assessments	Izmir, Turkey/ 15- 19 Sept. 2008
SCSA Working Group on Small Pelagic Species , including joint stocks assessments	Izmir, Turkey/ 22- 26 Sept. 2008
Session of the SCSA	Antalya, Turkey/ 13-16 Oct. 2008
Session of the SCESS	Antalya, Turkey/ 13-16 Oct. 2008

Meetings	Place/Date
SCCESS/SCSA Working Group on Recreational Fisheries (back to back to the SCESS session)	Antalya, Turkey/ during 13-16 Oct. 2008
Session of the SCSI	Antalya, Turkey/13- 16 Oct. 2008
SCSI/SCESS/SCSA Workshop to refine the fleet segmentation (back to back with the SCSI)	Antalya, Turkey/ during 13-16 Oct. 2008
Session of the SCMEE	Antalya, Turkey/ 13-16 Oct. 2008
CMSC	Antalya, Turkey/ 17 Oct 2008
Eleventh session of the SAC	Morocco/1-5 Dec 2008