

October 2007



GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN

COMMISSION GÉNÉRALE DES PÊCHES POUR
LA MÉDITERRANÉE



GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tenth Session

Nicosia, Cyprus, 22-26 October 2007

**REPORT OF THE 8TH MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON
MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND ECOSYSTEMS (SCMEE)*
KAVALA, GREECE, 17-20 SEPTEMBER 2007**

*** Available only in English**

OPENING AND ARRANGEMENT FOR THE MEETING

1. The eighth meeting of the Sub-Committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems (SCMEE) of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) was held in Kavala, Greece, from 17 to 20 September 2007. It was attended by experts from seven (7) Members as well as by representatives from the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS), the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (UNEP-MAP-RAC/SPA) and the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF). The list of participants is provided in Appendix 2.

2. The meeting was opened by the Coordinator of the Sub-Committee, Mr M. Bradai, who welcomed the participants. He presented the main activities carried out during the intersession and introduced the main topics to be addressed by the Sub-Committee.

3. Ms C. Pergent-Martini and Mr C. Raïs acted as Rapporteurs for the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. The draft agenda and the presentations related to each agenda item were introduced. The agenda provided in Appendix 1 was adopted.

REVIEW OF THE JOINT GFCM-ACCOBAMS COOPERATION ON FISHERY-CETACEAN INTERACTIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND NEW INITIATIVES TO EXTEND TO OTHER PROTECTED/THREATENED SPECIES.

5. The representative of ACCOBAMS Secretariat informed about the joint GFCM/ACCOBAMS activities carried out to collect data on interactions between fisheries and cetaceans using a questionnaire. He emphasized that only few replies to the questionnaire were received and thus proposed to designate a responsible expert to contact scientists, institutions and organisations and to promote the questionnaire.

6. The meeting agreed to extend the above mentioned initiative concerning the interactions between cetaceans and fisheries to marine birds, sea turtles and elasmobranches.

7. Mr J. Sacchi briefly presented a draft version of the document “Impact des techniques de pêche en Méditerranée: solutions d’amélioration” which was elaborated as a request of the SAC at its eighth session¹. The full presentation of the document was made during the transversal session (see point 4.2 below). A further elaborated version of the document will be prepared taking into account the comments received. The document is expected to be published in the GFCM Studies and Reviews series.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF TRANSVERSAL ISSUES

Preliminary review by the Sub-Committee

Standard format proposed for the submission of FRA to GFCM

8. The meeting reviewed the standard format originally proposed by the SAC transversal workshop on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) (Tunis, 24-25 May 2007) for the submission of new GFCM Fishery Restricted Areas (FRAs) to GFCM. The standard format as amended and adopted by the Sub-Committee appears in Appendix 3.

Proposition for a new FRA

9. A new proposal of FRA covering the Cap Creus Canyon was presented by WWF according to the above mentioned standard format for submitting FRA proposals to GFCM.

10. The Sub-Committee discussed this proposal and convened to submit it to the forthcoming SAC for consideration, taking into account the need to improve this proposal before its submission, on the basis of comments and views by the participants to be submitted to the SCMEE Coordinator no later than 2 October 2007. The revised proposal considering these comments will be finalized and submitted for SAC consideration at the earliest convenience.

¹ paragraph 82 of the report of the eight session

Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries

11. The Sub-Committee evaluated the outcomes of the transversal workshop held in Tunis (22-23 May 2007) and noted that limited progress has been made in developing the concept of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries. It was proposed to encourage the elaboration of case studies where possible and appropriate, with the GEF LME project.

12. The meeting noted also that the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries is a transversal topic and thus needs to be addressed by the other Sub-Committees of the SAC as well. This applies also for the ecological indicators in relation to EAF.

Deep Sea

13. Mr C. Raïs presented the draft document on “inventory of published studies on fisheries and biodiversity of deep sea areas” requested by the SAC at its ninth session². He informed the meeting that at this stage the inventory includes about 250 papers addressing the following 10 topics: biology of species, earth science, oceanography, ecology, microbiology, zoology, hydrobiology, biomedicine, geophysics/geodesy and geology.

14. He also presented the outline of this document and invited the participants to provide their comments and views for its improvement.

15. During the discussion it was suggested to focus mainly on the recent publications and to make a gap analysis with the view of identifying the areas where the information is not available.

16. As for the definition of deep sea, the meeting recognised the importance of having a clear definition of the deep sea and stressed the need to take into account the specific characteristics of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

17. It was also suggested to take into account the outcome of the FAO project on deep seas and to investigate how this activity could be linked to SAPBIO.

Review and discussion by the transversal session of the Sub-Committees

18. This item was addressed during the joint session attended by the four Sub-Committees.

Ecosystem Approach to fisheries

19. Mr M. Bradai presented the conclusions and recommendations of the transversal workshop on EAF held in Tunis. He emphasized that there are still challenges in terms of sharing a common understanding of the principles of EAF.

20. While commending the work done for the case studies presented during the workshop on EAF, the participants noted that the development of the case studies presented to the meeting needed to be completed by socio-economic and other aspects.

² paragraph 74 of the report of the ninth session

Marine Protected Areas

21. Mr C. Raïs presented the main conclusions and recommendations of the joint workshop GFCM-RAC/SPA held in Tunis. In this context he stressed the need for a harmonization of terminology and categories of MPAs and the weakness of the representativity of the Mediterranean MPA as for the habitats covered. The workshop pointed out that MPAs alone are not sufficient to protect certain species (e.g. the dusky grouper *Epinephelus marginatus*) and that additional measures are required at a regional level.

PROGRESS OF BYCBAMS PROJECT FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CETACEAN POPULATION STATUS AND STATUS OF THE COMMON DOLPHINS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND WAYS TO MITIGATE IMPACT CAUSED BY/ON FISHERIES

22. The representative of the ACCOBAMS Secretariat informed on the progress made in implementing the ByCBAMS project. In this context he recalled the main and specific objectives as well as the activities of the project. He emphasized that thanks to a funding provided by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, the following project activities are being implemented: Elaboration of standard methodology for data collection on cetacean/fisheries interactions and collection of data along the Italian coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

23. He also noted that small-scale projects are being implemented or proposed to be implemented in the framework of ByCBAMS activities in Morocco, Romania and Tunisia.

24. During the discussion, some participants stressed the need of involving fishery specialists in the development and implementation of the project activities. The participants emphasized that the actual extent and significance of cetacean bycatch should be evaluated at regional rather than at national or local level. In this context, they stressed the need for a regional estimates of cetacean population.

25. Mr Ben Naceur presented the activities of INSTM aimed at mitigating the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishery activities. The activities included surveys for dolphin population estimates, development and experiments on the use of acoustic deterrent devices and awareness raising programmes targeting fishermen.

26. The Sub-Committee stressed the need to encourage the development of programmes integrating both conservation and fishery concerns.

27. Following a discussion about the usefulness and efficiency of pingers, the meeting recommended to pursue the research and development of these devices while promoting collaboration among scientists and research institutions working on these topics.

28. With respect to the status of common dolphin, the representative of ACCOBAMS Secretariat informed the meeting that the objective behind the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the meeting was to consult with the members of the SCMEP about the impact of prey depletion on the population of common dolphin in some areas of the Mediterranean Sea. He suggested that this topic be addressed as part of the future works of the SCMEP on fishery reserves.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

29. SCMEE made the following conclusions:

- a. The review of the joint GFCM-ACCOBAMS cooperation to collect data on interactions between fisheries and cetaceans, using a questionnaire, showed that only few replies to the questionnaire were received. The designation of an expert to follow up and encourage the reply to the questionnaire was proposed. The participants recommend extending this initiative to marine birds, sea turtles and elasmobranchs.
- b. A further elaborated version of the document on “Impact des techniques de pêche en Méditerranée, solutions d’amélioration” will be prepared taking into account the comments received. The document is expected to be published as GFCM Studies and Reviews Series.
- c. A standard format for the submission of Fishery Restricted Area (FRA) to GFCM was adopted by the Sub-Committee.
- d. The proposal of WWF related the new FRA covering the Cap Creus Canyon will be revised by the author and submitted to the next session of SAC for consideration.
- e. Limited progress has been made in developing the concept of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries which was considered as a transversal topic to be addressed together by the other relevant SAC Sub-Committees. The elaboration of case studies, where possible and appropriate, with the GEF LME Project, was encouraged.
- f. The need for having a clear definition of the deep sea taking into account the specific characteristics of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea was stressed. It was also suggested to take into account the results of the FAO project on Deep seas.
- g. It was emphasised that the actual extent and significance of cetacean by catch should be evaluated at regional level than at national or local scale. In this context, they stressed the need for a regional estimate of cetacean populations. It stressed also the need of encouraging the development of programmes integrating both the conservation and fishery concerns.

30. The SCMEE made the following recommendations:

- i. The organization of a transversal Working Group on by catch/incidental catches (in collaboration with ACCOBAMS). The Commission agreed already upon the organization of this WG in 2008, SCMEE recommended enlarging the objectives as follows :
 - a. reduction of by-catch and fishing mortality for threatened species (chondrychtians, turtles, seabirds, marine mammals),
 - b. evaluation and improvement of survival after escapement,
 - c. technology for avoiding by-catch of juveniles (e.g. acoustic detection, etc.),
 - d. implementation of mitigating measure (smart gear incentive program, etc.),

- e. physical impact on sensitive sea bed and habitat with a particular attention for continental slope bottom and sub-marine meadows.
- ii. elaboration of an evaluation report of the efficiency of fishing reserves in the Mediterranean as a tool for the management of fishing resources and the conservation of biodiversity
- iii. Identification of sensitive habitats of interest for priority species by GSA.
- iv. Continuation of the research and development of pingers while promoting collaboration among scientists and institutes working on these topics.
- v. Extension of the joint GFCM-ACCOBAMS cooperation to collect data on interactions between fisheries and cetaceans to marine birds, sea turtles and elasmobranchs.

(For each issue, a working document will be prepared by the members of the SCMEE and submitted to the workshop)

31. As for the work on indicators (paragraphs 50 of the report of the 30th session of GFCM and 77 of the report of the 31st session of GFCM), the meeting considered that the subject needed further consideration before launching activities.

FUNCTIONING OF THE SCMEE REGARDING THE SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES, IN CONNECTION WITH WORKING GROUPS AND WITH TRANSVERSAL SESSION

32. No specific comment was made during the meeting. However, Mr. Bradai participated at the Coordinating Meeting of the Sub-Committees (CMSC), held in Kavala on 21 September 2007, which addressed this issue.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

33. No other matter was raised by the participants.

NOMINATION OF THE SCMEE COORDINATOR

34. The meeting was informed by the GFCM Secretariat on the procedures of selection as well as on the Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee Coordinators.

35. Mr Bradai was thanked for the good work done during his term. He was nominated by the Sub-Committee for another two-year term.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

36. The Sub-Committee took note with satisfaction of the invitation addressed by Mr Haydar Fersoy (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ankara) on behalf of his country, offering to host the next meeting of the Sub-Committee in Antalya, Turkey, subject to the confirmation of the competent authorities. The date of the meeting will be determined by the Scientific Advisory Committee.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

37. The report was adopted by the Sub-Committee on 20 September 2007.

Appendix 1**Agenda**

1. Opening and arrangements for the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Review of the joint GFCM-ACCOBAMS cooperation on fishery-Cetacean interactions in the Mediterranean and new initiatives to extend to other protected/threatened species
 - Presentation of document: Impact des techniques de pêche en Méditerranée: Solutions d'amélioration (J. Sacchi)
4. Review and discussion of transversal issues
 - 4.1. Preliminary review by the Sub-Committee
 - Standard format proposed for the submission of FRA to GFCM
 - Proposition of new FRA: Cap Creus canyon
 - Inventaire/synthèse bibliographique concernant la pêche et la biodiversité des zones de mer profondes
 - 4.2. Review and discussion by the Sub-Committees transversal session 1
5. Progress of ByCBAMS project for the knowledge of the cetacean population status and status of the common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea and ways to mitigate impact caused by/on fisheries
 - Nouvelles données sur les dauphins en Tunisie
 - Progress made so far in implementing the Project for assessing the adverse impacts of interactions between cetaceans and fishing activities in the ACCOBAMS Area (ByCBAMS)
6. Conclusions and recommendations
7. SCMEE 2008 workplan
 - a. Transversal Working Group on by-catch/incidental catches (jointly with ACCOBAMS)
 - b. Other activities (to be defined by the Sub-Committee)
8. Functioning of the SCMEE regarding the scientific activities, in connection with its Working Groups and with the transversal activities.

9. Any other matters
10. Nomination of the SCMEE Coordinator
11. Date and venue of the next meeting
12. Adoption of the report

Annex 1

**CONTENT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES
TRANSVERSAL SESSION
(Agenda item 4.2)**

- 1) **Methodology to Analyse Disaggregated Fishery Data (by J.Lleonart)**
 - Conclusions of the Workshop on disaggregated Fishery Data (France, 12-16 March 2007)
 - Elaboration of guidelines on the use of disaggregated data to identify fisheries parameters (OU, fishing effort...)
- 2) **Selectivity in the Mediterranean trawl fisheries (by K.R. Constantina/Sacchi).**
 - Conclusions of the Workshop on selectivity in the Mediterranean trawl fisheries (Spain, 2-4 April 2007)
 - Presentation of the document on reference technics on impact of certain fishing gears on the environment
 - Works on improving gear selectivity, with special attention to trawls
- 3) **Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (by M.N Bradai).**
 - Conclusions of the Workshop on EAF (Tunisia, 22-23 May 2007)
 - Common framework for the implementation of EAF in the Mediterranean, according to the FAO guidelines, including feasibility studies in selected GFCM GSAs.
- 4) **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) (by C. Rais).**
 - Conclusions of the Workshop on MPAs (Tunisia, 24-25 May 2007)
 - Presentation of the inventory/synthesis of published studies on fisheries and biodiversity of the Mediterranean deep sea.
 - Proposition of new fisheries restricted areas
- 5) **The compilation of GFCM Task 1 data (by M. Camilleri).**
 - Conclusions of the Workshop on the compilation of GFCM task 1 (Morocco, 19-22 June 2007)

Appendix 2**List of participants**

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Appendix 3**Date of endorsement by the SCMEE****STANDARD FORMAT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS FOR GFCM
FISHERIES RESTRICTED AREAS (FRA) IN THE MEDITERRANEAN****Name of the FRA:****Submitted by (Institution, Scientists, GFCM members...):****Date of submission:**

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (maximum 500 words)

Supply a summary of the information contained in sections 2 to 8, including the expected results.

[Empty box for Executive Summary content]

2 AREA IDENTIFICATION**2.1 GFCM GEOGRAPHICAL SUBAREA**

http://www.icm.csic.es/rec/projectes/scsa/SAC_Geographical_SubAreas_2007.pdf

2.2 NAME OF THE FRA**2.3 GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION****2.3.1 General location**

2.3.2. Precise location of the proposed core area: provide geographical coordinates (latitude and longitude in degrees, minutes and seconds) for the vertex of a polygonal area.

2.3.3. Buffer area (if applicable), provide geographical coordinates (latitude and longitude in degrees, minutes and seconds) for the vertex of a polygonal area.

2.3.4. Location Map: include geographical coordinates of the core and buffer areas, bathymetry, and the boundary of international waters. Add a global reference map of the Mediterranean with the location of the site.

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2.3.5. Depth range (in m; specify core and buffer area, if applicable)

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2.4 SURFACE AREA (in ha and km²; specify core and buffer area if applicable)

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3 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 MAIN PHYSICAL FEATURES

3.1.1. Geology/Geomorphology

Give a brief description of the geological aspects; processes of sedimentation and erosion observable in the area and other geomorphologic features. Geological risks. Indicate bibliographical sources.

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3.1.2. Other interesting physical or chemical features: Such as hydrodynamics, frontal areas, upwelling, etc. than support the proposal

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3.2 BIOLOGICAL FEATURES

3.2.1. Habitats: A brief description of the dominant marine habitats including pelagic ones if applicable

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3.2.2. List of regionally important species

List here those marine species protected by international agreements (specify the agreement) and/or included in the GFCM priority list. If applicable, give the IUCN category. Any other species may be listed if it is clearly considered of regional importance given its high representation in the area. For each species state:

- a) its relative abundance as Common (C), Uncommon (U) or Occasional (O),
- b) Its regional status as rare (r), endemic (e) and/or threatened (t), and
- c) its status as an important resident population (R), or important for its breeding (B), feeding (F), wintering (W) or migratory passage (M)

SPECIES	Rel. Abundance (C) (U) (O)	Regional STATUS (r) (e) (t)	Local STATUS (R) (B) (F) (W) (M)

3.2.3. Occurrence of biological and ecological processes relevant to fish resources (Essential fish habitats)

3.3 USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

3.3.1. Current fishing use and development of fisheries

a) Briefly describe the current use of the area by artisanal, industrial and recreational fishing,.

b) Enter how many of the users depend on these resources, seasonality, and assessment of the social and economic importance of their use and of the perceived impact on the conservation of the area, in a score of 0-1-2-3 (meaning null, low, medium, high).

ACTIVITY AND CATEGORY	ASSESS IMPORTANCE OF								ESTIMATED No. of USERS	SEASONALITY
	SOCIO-ECONOMIC				CONSERV. IMPACT					
FISHING										
Artisanal	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3		
Industrial	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3		
Other:										
▪ Aquaculture										
▪										

3.3.2. Current human use and development (except for fisheries)

a) Briefly describe the current use of the area by other economic sectors

b) Enter how many of the users depend on these resources, seasonality, and assessment of the social and economic importance of their use and of the perceived impact on the conservation of the area, in a score of 0-1-2-3 (meaning null, low, medium, high).

ACTIVITY AND CATEGORY	ASSESS IMPORTANCE OF								ESTIMATED No. of USERS	SEASONALITY
	SOCIO-ECONOMIC				CONSERV. IMPACT					
OTHER ACTIVITES										
Tourism	0	1	2	3						
Transport	0	1	2	3						
Mining										
-										
-										

4 REGIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THE SITE

This Section aims at stressing the importance of the site for conservation at the regional scale.

4.1 PRESENCE OF ECOSYSTEMS/HABITATS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**4.2 PRESENCE OF HABITATS THAT ARE CRITICAL TO ENDANGERED, THREATENED OR ENDEMIC SPECIES**

Name the habitat types and the species linked to it. Give information about its status (IUCN classification, etc.).

4.3 OTHER RELEVANT FEATURES**4.3.1. Educational Interest**

E.g. particular values for activities of environmental education or awareness

4.3.2. Scientific Interest

Explain if the site represents a particular value for research.

5 IMPACTS AND ACTIVITIES AFFECTING THE AREA

5.1 IMPACTS AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SITE

5.1.1. Exploitation of natural resources

Assess if the current rates of exploitation of natural resources within the area (e.g. fishing, sand and mineral exploitation) are deemed unsustainable in quality or quantity, and try to quantify these threats, e.g. the percentage of the area under threat, or any known increase in extraction rates.

5.1.2. Threats to habitats and species

Mention any serious threats to the habitat (e.g. Modification, disturbance, pollution) or to species (e.g. disturbance, poaching, introduced alien species...) within the area.

5.2 IMPACTS AND ACTIVITIES AROUND THE SITE

5.2.1. Pollution

Name and describe sources of pollution.

5.2.2. Other external threats, natural and/or anthropogenic

Briefly describe any other external threat to the ecological, biological, aesthetic or cultural values of the area (such as unregulated exploitation of natural resources, serious threats on habitats or species, pollution problems) likely to influence the area in question.

5.2.3. Sustainable development measures

Comment whether the area is covered by a management plan or bordering upon a zone under such a plan.

6 EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS¹

This is not always easy to assess and thus, it is not obligatory to fill in this Section.

6.1 EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS OF THREATS TO AND PRESSURES UPON THE AREA

Deal briefly with the development of economic activities within the area

¹ By expected development and trends are meant the development, which is thought most likely to occur in the absence of any deliberate intervention to protect and manage the site.

7 MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION REGIME**7.1 LEGAL STATUS (if applicable)****7.1.1. Historical background of the management related to the area****7.1.2. Regulatory framework currently ruling the management of the site**

Mention if the area, or part of it, has been designated and on what date, with an international or regional convention.

7.1.3. Objectives

Name in order of importance the objectives of the area as stated in its legal declaration.

7.2 LEGAL BACKGROUND

Briefly mention if the area or part of it is subject to any legal claim, or to any file open in that connection within the framework of an international body.

7.3 LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR MANAGEMENT**7.3.1. Zoning regulating the area**

Briefly state if the legal text protecting the area provides for different zones to allocate different management objectives of the area (e.g. core and scientific zones, fishing zones, etc) and in this case the surface area of these zones. Include a map as an annex.

7.3.3. Legal competencies

Legal competence and responsibility with regard to administration and implementation of regulatory measures.

7.3.4. Other legal provisions

Describe any other relevant legal provisions, such as those requiring a management plan or any other significant measures concerning the protection and management of the area.

8 OBJECTIVES OF THE FRA AND PROPOSED MANAGEMENT MEASURES**8.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE FRA**

State the reasons that justify the designation of the FRA

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8.2 PROPOSED PROTECTION MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR THE FRA**8.2.1. Management measures**

Suggest management measures to be implemented in the FRA

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8.2.2. Monitoring, Control and Surveillance measures

Suggest measures to effectively enforce the FRA

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8.2.3. Socioeconomic impact(s) of the FRA

Prevision of the socioeconomic impact(s) of the proposed measures

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8.2.3.1. Economic evaluation of the ecosystems services (not only marketable)

Economic value of the goods and services that the ecosystem supports

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9 OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

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10 RELEVANT ADDRESSES

(Stakeholders (if applicable) or name(s), position(s) and contact address (es) of the person(s) that compiled the report and/or can provide further information).

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