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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 COORDINATING MEETING
OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES (CMSC)
(21st September 2007)**

OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), and of the Coordinating Meeting of the Sub-Committees (CMSC), Mr. Corrado Piccinetti, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants (list in Appendix 2). He highlighted the importance of the items suggested in the Agenda (Appendix 1) of the Meeting and further recalled that the Coordinating Meeting was expected to bring forward the various pending issues raised during the inter-sessional period, especially during the respective sessions of the Sub-Committees, so as to facilitate the decision making process during the SAC session.

REVIEW OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES INCLUDING THE OUTCOME FROM THE TRANSVERSAL SESSION

2. The Coordinators presented the main conclusions and recommendations of their respective Sub-Committee together with the proposed work plan for the 2008 inter-sessional period. These were discussed together with the outcomes of the transversal session.

Multidisciplinary advice on fisheries management

3. The CMSC recalled Recommendation GFCM/2006/1 on the "Management of certain fisheries exploiting demersal and small pelagic species" which requested SAC to identify, *inter alia*, the operational units and parameters to measure the fishing effort of such fisheries both in terms of capacity, fishing activity and, if relevant, number and dimension of fishing gears. This information

was considered necessary for developing fisheries management programmes based on fishing effort control. The Meeting further pointed out the relevance for SAC to produce such information in appropriate way..

4. As noted by the last CMSC meeting, the lack of quantitative indications on fishing effort when technical measures based on the effort were advised is still characterising most of the stock assessment works presented to the SCSA relevant Working Groups. However, the Meeting underlined the fact that quantitative information on fishing effort (in terms of capacity, fishing time and gear units) would be compiled through the GFCM Task 1 reporting and that information provided through the new stock assessment form would be contributing to complement this information.

5. The issue related to the eligibility of the proposed Fisheries Restricted Area by WWF, especially the procedure followed for its submission was questioned. Assuming that SAC may, notwithstanding the circumstances, accept to review the proposal together with any related comments submitted by experts during the period prior to the SAC session, the CMSC stressed however the need to fine tune the procedure, particularly with regard to setting up a deadline for submission, taking into account possible translation needs. The CMSC further noted that the definitions for MPAs and related fisheries management objective(s), in general, have not been addressed fully by the SCMEF and stressed the need for the Sub-Committee to pursue efforts accordingly.

6. The work carried out by the AdriaMed project in relation to defining priority species and shared stocks was remarked as an interesting step in the discussion. It was agreed to provide it to SAC as a "Document made available- Dma".

Appraisal of the Sub-Committees transversal session

7. The efficiency of the transversal meeting held during the Sub-Committees session was assessed and its importance for the Sub-Committees joint discussions of multidisciplinary topics was acknowledged. The CMSC noted, however, the need to clearly define its objectives in order to ensure a better added value for the Sub-Committees achievements and to optimize the time used in the session.

8. It was recommended 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, at least, Sub-Committee Coordinators should attend the transversal undertaking in which their Sub-Committee is either the lead technical unit or a partner.

STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRELIMINARY 2008 WORKPLAN OF SAC

Prioritization of activities

9. The CMSC emphasized that priority activities should be more clearly identified by each Sub-Committee, including through better identifying actions intended for approval of the Committee from those strictly concerning tools used by the concerned Sub-Committee to implement its work (known as "recommendations for the Sub-Committee").

10. Overall, the CMSC noted that the preliminary work plan as a whole appears very ambitious, particularly in term of the number of activities and meetings of new proposed Working Groups which may entail the need for SAC to thoroughly set priorities compatible with the GFCM

autonomous budget and the likely support that the FAO Regional projects would be able to guarantee. The need for a Medium-term rolling plan (e.g.: an effective updating of the “Reference Framework for the work of SAC as used in the past by the Commission”) was emphasized.

11. The CMSC reiterated that the utmost action of paramount importance remained the regular provision of requested data (i.e: Task 1) by GFCM Members as well as by scientists (e.g: assessments) and that deadlines should be set in order to promote higher efficiency in data submission and analysis.

Impact of the projects regarding the development of SAC activities

12. The CMSC acknowledged the valuable contributions forthcoming from AdriaMed and MedSudMed in support to SAC activities.

13. The Meeting noted that FAO and GFCM were collaborating effectively in the planning and execution of the GEF project. It was explained that the GEF project would contribute to the work of the SCMEE especially to undertake case studies on the EAF in selected participating countries. It was underlined that GEF will not take over or subsidise the Sub-Committee activities as such..

14. The GFCM Secretariat informed the Coordinating meeting on progress made in the formulation of a Sub-regional project for the Black Sea, as required by the Commission. It further announced that it was planning to hold a meeting with all Black Sea riverine Countries’ Permanent Representatives to FAO to present SAC and FAO/GFCM sub-regional projects’ activities. Some participants alluded to the usefulness of involving at the earliest stage scientists, at least from Turkey, and a representative from the Black Sea Environment Commission in the preliminary formulation phase of the project. The Meeting invited the Secretariat to follow up on the request made by Romania to participate in the MedStat programme.

15. The CMSC discussed with much concern the negative implications of delays in the starting / stalling of certain sub-regional projects, namely CopeMed II, EastMed and MedFisis. The Meeting invited the GFCM Executive Secretary to pursue effort to help FAO and concerned donors solving the several pending issues, to investigate the matter further and report to SAC.

16. The question as to why some available funds from the Eastmed formulation phase were not used in supporting the participation of experts from the Eastern Mediterranean countries in the sub-committee meetings was also raised.

17. With regard in particular to the MedFisis project, it was recalled that the Extraordinary Session of the Commission held in 2004 had agreed that the functions of the GFCM statistician were to be covered by the Medfisis project until 2007. It noted that the statistical unit of the GFCM Secretariat has recently been established through the recruitment of the Bio-statistician, consultants and the Programmer (to be selected shortly). It was further recalled that the Project was expected by the Commission to provide direct support to the GFCM in developing its own statistics and information system¹, including the implementation of the conceptual and system development tasks for revitalizing SIPAM^{2,3}. Medfisis was also given the responsibility of coordinating all regional and/or sub-regional efforts related to the collection of fishery data² and undertaking the development

¹ 31st session

² 28th session

of databases related to the regional fleet register³ and the Authorised Vessel List⁴, as well as of creating the regional framework for the compilation of data by Operational Unit². The idea behind Medfisis was to avoid dispersion of the latest know-how and work undertaken under the FAO projects in the GFCM area. On the other hand, it was also noted the increasing difficulties (administrative and operational) which were being faced by the Medfisis project in executing its mandate.

18. As a result, the CMSC expressed the view that the possibility to transfer the execution of MedFisis to the GFCM Secretariat, thereby avoiding the costs of permanent staff on the project and favouring more fields activities, should be investigated at the earliest.

19. Finally, the Meeting acknowledged the achievements performed by the MedStat programme during last years and welcomed the outline of its envisaged further development notably to reinforce national and regional capacities in the field of fisheries statistics and to contribute to the effort made to build reliable regional databases...

ISSUES RELATED TO THE SAC/SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS FUNCTIONING

20. The CMSC noted that the preparation of management advice was being filtered at several stages and suggested that the Working Groups should be seen as “specialised arms” of the respective Sub-Committees which could, on an exceptional basis, provide recommendations directly to SAC. .. I also noted the need to ensure technical and scientific peer review through the current organogram, particularly to guarantee a necessary legitimacy to the scientific advice formulated by the Sub-Committees. It was however stressed that the GFCM/ICCAT Working group on Large Pelagic should continue reporting directly to SAC, although it was suggested that a preliminary review of its outputs should be undertaken by the CMSC.

21. The Meeting strongly supported the proposal to “upgrade” the Workshop on selectivity into a formal Fishing Technology/Selectivity Working Group to be placed under the lead technical responsibility of the SCMEE.

22. The CMCS noted that the following points were hindering the efficient functioning of all Sub-Committees:

- limited interaction among experts from different discipline during meetings and / or workshops and unbalanced participation at transversal undertakings;
- too many issues being tackled at the same time;
- the lack of sufficient involvement of National Focal Points and liaison with the Coordinators during the intersessional period.

23. The CMCS supported the suggestion to increase the frequency of training courses organised in collaboration with CIHEAM.

REVIEW OF THE GFCM PUBLICATIONS

³ 30th session

⁴ 29th session

24. The CMCS invited the Secretariat to review any pending publications and to assess whether they are still relevant.

25. The Meeting recommended that the new GFCM Website should host the scientific documents presented during the meetings of the subsidiaries of each Sub-Committees.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

26. The CMCS supported the suggestion that, for the time being, the issue of climate change and its impact on fisheries would continue to be followed by the GFCM Secretariat within the framework of actions being undertaken by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department on this subject.

Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Review of the main conclusions and recommendations of the Sub-Committees including the outcome from the transversal session
 - Multidisciplinary advice on fisheries management for examination by SAC. Its preparation will be based on the outcome from Sub-Committees meeting as well as from the transversal session
 - Assessment of the transversal session performance and suggestions for next sessions
3. Strategy for implementing the preliminary 2008 workplan of SAC.
 - Prioritization of activities
 - Actions to promote data and information transmission by the Members
 - Impact of the projects regarding the development of SAC activities, including status of CopeMed II and EastMed; Black Sea program; MedFisis; GEF project "Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean LME"
4. Issues related with the SAC/Sub-Committees and Working groups functioning
 - Review of the WGs and their performance
 - Programming of meetings
5. Review of the GFCM publications
 - Scientific and technical documents to be published by the Secretariat ;
6. Any other matters
 - discussing impacts (adaptation, mitigation) of climate change from an integrated perspective

List of Participants

Corrado Piccinetti, SAC Chairman

Nicos Hadjstephanou, SAC first Vice Chairman

Costantina Karlou-Riga, SAC second Vice Chairman and SCSA Coordinator

Mohamed Malouli Idrissi, SCESS Coordinator

Mohamed Nejemeddine Bradai, SCMEE coordinator

Alain Bonzon, GFCM Executive Secretary

Abdellah Srour, GFCM Deputy Executive Secretary

Matthew Camilleri, GFCM Biostatistician

Jordi Leonart, FAO/GFCM Secretariat (SCSA)

Fabio Massa, AdriaMed and MedsudMed Coordinator