



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



**GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE  
MEDITERRANEAN**

**SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Eighth Session**

**Tirana, Albania, 25-28 October 2005**

**SAC PRELIMINARY WORKPLAN FOR 2006**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. As part of its mandate, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) provides the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) with the preliminary workplan for the Committee's next intersession period, for adoption by the Commission at its following ordinary session. In the present document, the Chairperson of the SAC reports issues relating to the identification of a series of activities that could constitute the preliminary workplan of the SAC for the 2006 intersession period, taking into account the principle of annuality of the Commission's budget. This document therefore complements document SAC8/2005/4 which resumes the activities proposed for each SAC sub-committee.

## **II. CONTEXT FOR THE 2005-2006 REFERENCE FRAMEWORK**

2. Since 2001, the SAC workplan has been guided by the Reference Framework for the mandate of the SAC 2002 – 2003 which the Commission used to establish the activities to be carried out for fisheries management and protection of the environment. At its 27<sup>th</sup> session in 2002, the Commission recalled that the Reference Framework needed to be periodically updated

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and that the Chairperson of the SAC should identify priority activities for the next intersession period on the basis of inputs available and outcomes from the intersession period<sup>1</sup>.

3. At its 28<sup>th</sup> session, the Commission provided further guidance on the work of the SAC. The GFCM invited the Committee to place more emphasis, *inter alia*, on a holistic approach to fisheries management, taking into account the multispecies nature of most shared fisheries. It also requested the SAC to strengthen the coordination and integration of activities among the sub-committees and to see that the recommendations from the stock and environmental assessments translated into fisheries management advice that took into account the socio-economic impacts of the measures suggested. At its 29<sup>th</sup> session, the GFCM took note of efforts made to formulate integrated advice that took into account the various dimensions of management of the fisheries concerned and urged the Committee to strengthen this trend; it also stressed that a larger number of stocks, especially shared stocks, and of Geographical Sub-Areas (GSAs) should be covered<sup>2</sup>. The Commission also recognized that much SAC advice related to the extension and consolidation of ongoing activities<sup>3</sup>. It confirmed the priorities of the 2005 workplan, to be complemented as necessary (e.g. ecosystem approach<sup>4</sup>; GFCM register of vessels of more than 15 metres authorized to fish; methodologies for monitoring and assessing stocks) including the assured scientific and technical monitoring, when necessary, of GFCM's recommendations of February 2005, notably as regards the control of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing<sup>5</sup> and the fishing of large pelagics<sup>6</sup>.

4. In recent years, the Commission has also provided guidance on the *modus operandi* of the SAC and its subsidiary bodies in order to achieve more efficient implementation of the Committee's workplan. At its extraordinary session in July 2004 the Commission adopted its autonomous budget for 2005. This included provisions for the series of meetings of SAC subsidiary bodies reported in document SAC8/2005/2. At its 29<sup>th</sup> session, the Commission requested that SAC's work proposals be compatible with projected expenditures from the autonomous budget or that they receive additional funding<sup>7</sup>.

### III. ELEMENTS FOR THE 2006 WORKPLAN

5. At its extraordinary session in July 2004, the GFCM also took note<sup>8</sup> that the SAC's medium-term task was to complete the series of integrated activities needed to close the fisheries management cycle, providing the Commission with all the elements for the implementation of management plans at sub-regional and basin level. For a number of shared fisheries, the SAC give priority to the reinforcement of such programmes. These could include the following activities:

- Harmonizing access regimes for joint or similar fisheries, by operational units;
- Concentrating more on the promotion of cross-sectional research programmes and information exchange to develop consensus on integrated fisheries management measures and raise the cost-effectiveness of research on regional fisheries and ecosystems;

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the 27<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 88.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 63-64.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 89.

<sup>4</sup> Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 92.

<sup>5</sup> Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session, paragraphs 74-81, Appendix G.

<sup>6</sup> Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 72-73, 90 and Appendix G.

<sup>7</sup> Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 93.

<sup>8</sup> As underlined in document GFCM:ES/2004/inf.4.

- Harmonizing the collection of statistical data, the analysis and reporting of GFCM needs, including agreeing on minimum standards, establishing the vessel register and compiling the digital Atlas;
- Upgrading national capacities in the above tasks; and
- Strengthening communication for improved coordination.

6. For the mid-term, and given the entry into effect of the autonomous budget, the Reference Framework for the mandate of the SAC should be reformulated to reinforce the coherence and integration of the various elements of the SAC workplan. This would help to highlight the principles identified in the appraisal of the Committee (2003) and ongoing progress, including the implementation of important concepts such as the operational units, the multidisciplinary regulation of fishing effort and the ecosystem approach, and to ensure the scientific follow-up to the Commission's recommendations. This would also highlight the role of the priority instruments that underlie the functionality of these concepts (e.g. indicators and reference points, parameters for monitoring fleet capacity, control and surveillance, etc.). Such a document would spell out the linkages that existed between the elements of the programme of each sub-committee and would help identify a three-year Reference Framework for the SAC with specific management objectives.

7. In the Chairperson's opinion, the SAC workplan for 2006 should continue to reflect the guidelines suggested in paragraph 5 above and essentially consist in fine-tuning, consolidating and extending most of the ongoing activities, with support from the regional projects.

8. At its 29<sup>th</sup> session, the GFCM stressed that the work proposals should be consistent with the forecast expenditures of the autonomous budget or should be complemented with additional financial resources<sup>9</sup>. In order to facilitate the forecasting of expenditures relating to the workplan, each sub-committee should in future prepare its provisional list of activities and meetings and specify, as far as possible, the terms of reference of envisaged studies and workshops, in accordance with the directives of the Commission, and should present a provisional agenda of the suggested meetings of the working groups and specify any needs for external inputs, such as consultants.

9. Thus, without prejudging the results of the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee and the decisions of the 30<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission, a summary provisional list of activities and meetings drawn from the suggestions made by the sub-committees is outlined below.

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

10. Given the general and still valid guidelines of the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee on the SCSA programme of work<sup>10</sup> and the conclusions of the sub-committee as summarized in document SAC8/2005/4 (paragraphs 5-17), the following priority activities are suggested for 2006:

- Testing the biological indicators and reference points on operational units;
- 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 and multispecies stocks, as well as fisheries targeting priority species;
- Conducting pilot tests on the application of non-conventional models of monitoring and assessing multispecies stocks 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;

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<sup>9</sup> Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 93.

<sup>10</sup> Report of the 6<sup>th</sup> session, paragraph 48.

- Promoting the creation of a network of Mediterranean technologists, including professionals; collecting information and establishing a databank on gear selectivity, employing the format agreed by the SCSA;
- Formulating a practical guide on selectivity studies, including a description of the stages leading to the standardization of selectivity studies on Mediterranean trawls.

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

11. At its sixth and seventh sessions, the Committee expressed the need 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; and complete the description of identified species clusters. At its seventh session, the Committee also recognized that the SCMEE programme tended to be overambitious<sup>11</sup>. On the basis of the SCMEE's proposals as summarized in document SAC8/2005/4, paragraphs 29-33, it is suggested that its priorities for 2006 should include the above activities as well as:

- Undertaking interdisciplinary pilot studies on the management of shared stocks at subregional level, identifying and applying the principles of the ecosystem approach at this level, and testing the ecological indicators for the spatio-temporal monitoring of fishing effort;
- Continuing to formulate a structured programme of research on species living at depths greater than 1000 metres;
- Extending analyses on the impact of driftnets on protected or endangered species to the whole of the Mediterranean; and
- 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.

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

12. At its 7<sup>th</sup> session, the Committee agreed as a priority to continue its studies on operational units and to prepare the format and characteristics of the GFCM central databank. At its 29<sup>th</sup> session, the Commission requested that priority be given to the establishment of the GFCM register of vessels, acting through the MedFisis project. In view of the outputs and recommendations of the SCSI, as summarized in document SAC8/2005/4 (paragraphs 19-22), it is suggested that the Committee set itself the following priorities for 2006:

- 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 workshop on operational units to perfect the standardization of the measurement of fishing effort for stabilized 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 (including the coding) 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 and available from the regional projects of FAO, of FAO/FIDI and other programmes;

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<sup>11</sup> Paragraph 90 of the Report of the 7<sup>th</sup> session.

- Compiling a list of national databases on fisheries;
- Assisting the MedFisis project in the collection and compilation of data on the registration of vessels of more than 15 metres authorized to fish (white list) and the compilation of relevant data on shorter vessels.

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

13. At its sixth session, the Committee endorsed the medium-term priorities for socio-economic research in fisheries, organized into the following categories:

- Feasibility studies related to the collection of socio-economic indicators of Mediterranean fisheries in GSAs not yet covered;
- Training in fisheries socio-economic analysis and management;
- Case studies on the application of socio-economic indicators in fisheries management and bio-economic modelling; and
- Research on markets for fish and fishery products, including prices, quality control, labelling, and imports/exports.

14. In addition, at its 7<sup>th</sup> session, the Committee invited FAO to organize a meeting on the use of the socio-economic indicators in fisheries management.

15. Taking into consideration the SCESS outputs and recommendations in 2005, as summarized in document SAC8/2005/4 (para.24-28), the following priority activities are suggested for 2006:

- Applying 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;
- Continuing the collection and analysis of data on indicators to cover all the GSAs and organizing a workshop in the use of these indicators in fisheries management;
- Drawing up a minimal list of social indicators, taking into account the methodology identified by the AdriaMed project, analysing their compatibility and testing their use on relevant operational units;
- Updating and ensuring the monitoring of information on legislation related to specific operational units;
- Studying likely socio-economic implications and different options for the adjustment of fishing effort and capacity where fishing management recommendations have been made, with particular regard to recreational fishing and the institutional and juridical frameworks for the monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of fisheries;
- Extending 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 Sustainable Bluefin Tuna Farming.**

16. Without prejudging SAC follow-up to the guidelines on sustainable bluefin tuna farming (document SAC8/2005/Inf.5), it is suggested that the SAC invite the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) to establish a specific timetable for implementation of these guidelines.

### **Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagic Species**

17. In view of the draft revised terms of reference (document SAC8/2005/2, Appendix 4) of the Working Group, it is suggested that for the 2006 intersession period, the group concentrate on:

- Compiling all available data on the fishing and biology of swordfish to identify technical measures for the management of its fisheries;
- Collecting and analysing information on recreational fishing;
- Ensuring follow-up to the recommendations of the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the Joint Working Group concerning albacore and small tunas, especially the compilation of statistics and the implementation of scientific research programmes.

18. In view of the priorities presented above and the Committee's request at its 7<sup>th</sup> session to limit the meetings of its subsidiary bodies, it is suggested that the following be convened during the next intersession period:

| Meeting  | Place <sup>12</sup> /Date      |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Ninth session of the SAC   | Rome /end October 2006         |
| Session of the SCSA, including: Working Group on Demersal Species; Working Group on Small Pelagic Species; 2 <sup>nd</sup> Permanent Working Group on Stock Assessment Methodologies | Rome /mid-September 2006       |
| Session of the SCESS   | Rome / to be defined           |
| Session of the SCSI, including the Transversal Working Group on Operational Units  | Rome / to be defined           |
| Session of the SCMEE   | Rome / to be defined           |
| CMSC   | To be defined / to be defined  |
| SCESS Workshop on the Use of Socio-Economic Indicators for Fisheries Management  | To be defined / to be defined  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> SCSA Permanent Working Group on Stock Assessment Methodologies   | Istanbul / 14-18 November 2005 |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> session of the Joint GFCM/ICCAT Working Group on Large Pelagic Species   | To be defined / to be defined  |

#### IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE'S ATTENTION

19. The Committee is invited to assess the activities proposed for its subsidiary bodies for 2006, in relation to the outputs from the performance of their respective mandates in 2005.

20. The SAC is also invited to amend, complement or refine the priorities outlined in this document, taking into consideration any suggestions of the Coordination Meeting of the Sub-Committees (CMSC) and related budget implications. In doing so, the Committee may wish to decide on the venue and dates of meetings and seek to convince members to host some of them.

<sup>12</sup> It is assumed that the new headquarters of the GFCM will be fully functional on the planned dates.