

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Sub-Committee on Statistics and Information (SCSI)

Ad Hoc Workshop on regional fleet register
FAO HQs, Rome (Italy), 12-14 May 2008

Chair : Joël Vigneau (SCSI Coordinator)

Background and objectives of the meeting

During the SCSI discussion in Kavala last September, the absence of a regional fleet register, as an essential tool in monitoring fishing capacity and in implementing responsible fisheries management, was noted. A preliminary list of data requirements for the regional fleet register was then presented in appendix 6 of the SCSI report. The following SAC meeting backed the SCSI strategy to set up a Mediterranean fleet register and discussed the proposal to convene a meeting related to the development of such a register. The SAC recommended that the fleet register meeting should be attended by officers from national administrations acquainted with the management of their own fleet registers.

The recent Commission meeting (32nd Session, February 2008) endorsed the proposal to establish a GFCM fleet register and to convene an ad hoc meeting on this subject following the terms of reference proposed by the SAC :

- review the status of the fishing vessel register in GFCM countries and/or sub-regions;
- design and agree upon the parameters and format which should constitute the GFCM regional fleet register;
- discuss and propose data exchange protocols for the transmission of fleet data to the GFCM Secretariat including for data updating procedures and the frequency of transmission;
- discuss confidentiality issues within the framework of Recommendation GFCM/2006/7 and distinguish between public, restricted and confidential data;
- discuss and propose simple capacity monitoring tools to be incorporated into the GFCM regional fleet register.

The Commission also acknowledged the offer made by EC to provide assistance to other Members on this subject.

Some developing countries and countries in transition expressed concerns during the 32nd Session of the Commission on the possible economic and social impacts on ongoing fleet restructuring or investment programmes. It is to be clear that no such issues will be discussed during our meeting. This fleet register meeting will be entirely devoted to the setting up of the tool itself and all the corresponding rules of implementation.

Draft annotated agenda and timetable

Monday 12 May
start at 10:00 am

1. Opening and arrangement of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Recalling basic concepts and functions of a fleet register and its relationship to the Authorised Vessels List and record of vessel activity status (by Matthew Camilleri)

From July 1st, 2006 each contracting party was to submit electronically to the GFCM Executive Secretary (Recommendation GFCM/2005/2), the list of vessels over 15 meters which are authorised to operate in the GFCM area. It was completed by Recommendation GFCM/2006/4 establishing a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities in the GFCM area. Initially, this latter recommendation applies to large-scale fishing vessels over 24 metres LOA, flying the flag of non-Contracting Parties, but its extension to other IUU fisheries is already planned. The planned fleet register must be considered as an extension of the Authorised Vessels List with different purposes, and seeking complementarities between the two approaches is one of the objectives of the meeting.

LUNCH

Afternoon, 14:30 pm

4. Status of national / regional fleet registers and capacity monitoring systems in the Mediterranean and Black Sea
 - presentations on national fleet register and capacity monitoring systems (by Member countries representative)

Presentations on national fleet registers and capacity monitoring systems should focus on the coverage of the current monitoring system and on the parameters currently being collected. What are the criteria used for indicating that a vessel should be registered? What are the administrative rules used to authorise a vessel to fish? How the history of fishing rights of the vessels is kept? A full description of the parameters stored for registering a vessel would be relevant to the meeting in order to agree on those parameters and related specifications to be used for the GFCM fleet register.

- European Community fleet register (by Mr Tom Torims)

The EC has prepared a working document with their comments on the GFCM fleet register (Cf. "Comments on GFCM fleet register.pdf"). This is a major contribution to the initiative, knowing that 9 Mediterranean and Black Sea countries are part of the EU and already submitting a fleet register on a regular basis. All information and related statistical analysis are available on the internet (<http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/fleet/index.cfm>). Moreover, one of the objective of the meeting will be to set up the data flow from the EU feeding the GFCM fleet register.

- MedStat experience
(by Mr Salvatore R. Coppola)

13 Mediterranean countries have implemented MedStat in various ways and levels, as a tool to organise and store fishing fleet and fisheries data. The current status of implementation of the National MedStat Fishing Fleet Registers would help in preparing the data flow from Member countries to the GFCM fleet register. Moreover, the compatibility between the parameters contained in the EU fleet register and the parameters contained in the National MedStat Fishing Fleet Registers will be a critical issue to discuss in detail to ensure the homogeneity of the GFCM fleet register.

- Review of experiences gained from maintaining the Authorised Vessels List
(by Matthew Camilleri)

Complementing the morning presentation, this review of experience will focus on data flow, data policy, confidentiality issues and all data management rules already defined for the Authorised Vessels List. These rules will be analysed in the light of the future GFCM fleet register to assess whether they should apply as such or if adjustments are needed.

Tuesday 13 May
9:00 am

5. Development of the GFCM fleet register

- Identifying fields, formats, codifications and standards of the GFCM fleet register
- Sub-components of the GFCM fleet register : Authorised Vessels List and record of vessel activity status
- Data exchange protocols, updating procedures and frequency of data transmission
- Publication of information and confidentiality issues : public, restricted and confidential information

The entire day is dedicated to plenary discussion and agreements on the specifications of each of the item listed above. A rapporteur will be named for each of the items. All elements of the GFCM fleet register will have to be precisely described in view of its proper implementation.

Wednesday 13 May
9:00 am

6. Identification of capacity monitoring tools to be integrated into the GFCM fleet register

Plenary discussion on the capacity monitoring tools, taking as an example the EU statistical bulletin (<http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/fleetstatistics/index.cfm?lng=en>). It is the group's responsibility to set up all the specifications of the statistical analysis and the public availability of the information. The meeting report must be the reference for all the technical developments related to the GFCM fleet register.

7. Conclusions and recommendations toward implementing a GFCM fleet register

In such a short meeting, there will hardly be a full text of the report to read, comment and agree upon. The rapporteur's notes will be browsed in detail to seek for agreement on the final text from which conclusions and recommendations will be excerpted. The objective is to leave no controversial issues for correspondence discussion after the meeting.

8. Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting

The conclusions and recommendations of the workshop will be formally adopted. The complete report will be circulated to all participants within two weeks following the meeting.