



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA

Fisheries conservation and control Mediterranean and Black Sea and horizontal management of fisheries data

Brussels, 28 April 2008

DG MARE/D.2/TT D(2008)

Subject: Preliminary comments for upcoming ad hoc workshop on regional GFCM fleet register, Rome, 12-14 May 2008

Currently there are nine European Union Member States which have fleets operating in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. Since these countries and the European Community are GFCM members, the Commission supports the development of a GFCM fishing fleet register for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The fishing fleets of the above mentioned countries are included in the Community Fleet Register (CFR), which has been set-up more than twenty years ago and has been constantly developed to cover fisheries management needs. It is a comprehensive and highly reliable data source not only for managing and monitoring the capacity of the Community fishing fleet and for EU Member States fisheries administrations, but also for the general public. The European Commission is ready to share its know-how and technical expertise on the setting-up and maintenance of the fleet register. The concept and data format used in the CFR could be used, possibly with some adaptations to GFCM Fleet Register needs. Thus the use of this tool which has proved to be very successful could be extended to all the Mediterranean Sea coastal countries.

However, this task is not an easy one and will require considerable efforts and political will from all involved Parties. The European Commission would like to address among other topics the following issues, which must be considered to create a comprehensive, reliable and functional GFCM Fleet Register.

Basic features and scope:

- Well defined data transmission procedures;
- Minimum set of coherent fleet data Validation Rules
- Census date for vessel reporting;
- Unique vessels identifier (like CFR number);
- Availability of GFCM FR on the public domain;
- Data will cover all "events" containing full history of fishing vessels as from Census date? Or only recent data only?
- Data uploading frequency and data updating procedures;
- Mandatory and optional data fields;
- Which vessels will be covered? Minimum limit (length over all or GT)?

- Personal data protection issues¹.

IT issues:

- Data submission format? (e.g. XML , NAF)
- Data submission means – on-line upload?
- System's security matters and data protection;
- Link with record of vessels activity status;
- Test environment should be established to allow all involved Parties to test their data in advance;
- Exchange of data with CFR and vice-versa;
- Fleet Register backup and archiving of data;
- Data analysing tools, such as comparisons between actual and previous fleet reports.

Finally, we would like to outline the following:

- The parameter used in the European Community for recording a vessels' tonnage is gross tonnage (GT) according to the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, signed in London on 23 June 1969 (London Convention).
- The "Vessel type" is not recorded in the CFR, but rather the fishing gears used by the vessel; this means that the above mentioned EU Member States would transfer only the gear type but not the vessel type data to the GFCM FR.
- There should be a limited period (e.g. three years) agreed during which GFCM Member Parties may correct their data in the FR. After that period only recent data entries and updates shall be allowed.

We look forward to discuss the above mentioned issues in the GFCM SCSI workshop in Rome. We will give a brief presentation regarding our experience with the CFR and will answer related questions

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¹ The policy on "protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions" is based on Regulation (EC) N° 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000.