



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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General Fisheries Commission
for the Mediterranean
Commission générale des pêches
pour la Méditerranée

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APPENDICES

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Agenda

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2. Progress on cooperation matters
3. Report on intersessional activities in 2017–2018
4. Management of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture
5. Issues stemming from the Compliance Committee (CoC)
6. Launch of the second performance review of the GFCM, including assessment of the implementation of the subregional approach
7. Programme of work for the period 2018–2020
8. Ninth session of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF)
9. Election of the GFCM Bureau and endorsement of the Bureau of SAC, WGBS and CAF
10. Any other matter
11. Date and place of the forty-third session
12. Review and adoption of the report

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List of documents

GFCM:42/2018/1	Provisional agenda and timetable
GFCM:42/2018/2	Report on fisheries intersessional activities in 2017–2018, recommendations and work plan for 2018–2020
GFCM:42/2018/3	Report on aquaculture intersessional activities in 2017–2018, recommendations and work plan for 2018–2020
GFCM:42/2018/4	Report on compliance intersessional activities in 2017–2018, recommendations and work plan for 2018–2020
GFCM:42/2018/5 (CAF 9)	Report of the Secretariat on administrative and financial issues
GFCM:42/2018/6 (CAF 9)	GFCM budget and contracting parties contributions for 2018–2020
GFCM:42/2018/7	Formal changes to relevant decisions proposed by the GFCM subsidiary bodies
GFCM:42/2018/8	Background document towards a second performance review of the GFCM
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.1	List of documents
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.2	Provisional list of participants
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.3	Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (Available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.4	Statement of competence and voting rights by the European Union and its member States
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.5	GFCM framework for cooperation and arrangements with non-contracting parties and partner organizations (Available in English only)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.6	Report of the forty-first session of the GFCM (Montenegro, 16–20 October 2017) (Available in Arabic, English and French)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.7	Report of the seventh meeting of the Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS) (Bulgaria, 11–13 July 2018) (Available in English only)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.8	Report of the twelfth session of the Compliance Committee (CoC) (Spain, 5–6 July 2018) (bilingual)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.9	Report of the twentieth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) (Morocco, 26–29 June 2018) (bilingual)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.10	Report of the tenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) (Turkey, 27–29 March 2017) (bilingual)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.11	Draft GFCM IUU vessel list (Available in English only)
GFCM:42/2018/Inf.12	Report on the operationalization and monitoring of the strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture
GFCM:42/2018/Dma.1	The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries (SoMFi) 2018

- GFCM:42/2018/Dma.2 Manual of the GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF) – Version 2018.1 (available in English and French)
- GFCM:42/2018/Dma.3 Sofia Ministerial Declaration (available in English)
- GFCM:42/2018/Dma.4 Regional plan of action for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (RPOA-SSF) (available in English and French)
- GFCM:42/2018/Dma.5 FAO. 2018. Macias, J.C., *et al.* 2018. *Allocated zones for aquaculture: a guide for the establishment of coastal zones dedicated to aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Studies and Reviews. No 97. Rome, FAO

The statements from the following countries/organizations will be included in the final report:

FAO,

GFCM,

European Union,

Morocco,

Algeria,

Republic of Moldova,

ACCOBAMS,

Eurofish,

IUCN,

OADA,

Oceana

OceanCare,

Shark League,

UN Environment – MAP

**Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/1 on a multiannual management plan for European eel
(*Anguilla anguilla* L.) in the Mediterranean**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

CONSIDERING that all measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

TAKING NOTE that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 recommends that marine and coastal ecosystems should be protected and sustainably managed by 2020;

TAKING NOTE that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 recommends that scientific knowledge should be increased and research capacity developed;

TAKING NOTE that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 recognizes the need to combat IUU fishing in order to ensure prosperity, food security and sustainability for all;

ACKNOWLEDGING that states have the duty, under international law, to cooperate through regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) in order to promote responsible fishing practices;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that the GFCM Scientific Advice Committee on Fisheries (SAC) concluded in its 19th session in May 2017 that the stock of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla* L.) was in as critical state;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the GFCM Scientific Advice Committee on Fisheries (SAC), following the conclusions of the Joint EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM Working Group on Eels (WGEEL), recommended in its 19th session in May 2017 that anthropogenic mortality affecting the production and escapement of silver eels be reduced – or maintained – as close to zero as possible;

WELCOMING the fact that the Scientific Advice Committee on Fisheries (SAC) recommended in its 19th session in May 2017 that data concerning European eel be collected within the DCRF;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;

CONSIDERING that certain fisheries management measures need to be revised and adapted to the evolution of both the status of exploited stocks and scientific knowledge, taking into account socio-economical aspect, and that an appropriate method to this end shall be established;

ACKNOWLEDGING the principles and international standards of responsible fishing practices enshrined in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries;

RECALLING that the signatories to the 2017 Malta MedFish4Ever Ministerial Declaration urged all riparian States to comply with the management measures adopted by the GFCM and fully implement the GFCM mid-term strategy for 2017-2020 towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries;

NOTING that Resolution GFCM/40/2016/2 for a mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries includes a specific target on reversing the declining trend of fish stocks through strengthened scientific advice in support of management;

BEARING IN MIND that Resolution GFCM/40/2016/2 for a mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries lists the European eel as a priority commercial species of conservation concern for which an advice should be produced for the Mediterranean Sea;

WELCOMING management efforts made by certain CPCs in support to a sustainable exploitation of European eel in their marine waters, freshwaters and in their transitional brackish waters such as lagoons and estuaries;

RECOGNIZING that urgent action is needed to ensure the recovery of the stock across its range of natural distribution and measures need to apply during all stages of the eel life cycle from the glass eel to the silver eel stage;

BEARING IN MIND that the particular migration and life cycle patterns displayed by catadromous fish require specific management and conservation measures;

NOTING that the GFCM Scientific Advice Committee on Fisheries (SAC) recommended, in its 19th Session in May 2017, that a Mediterranean adaptive regional management plan for this species shall be developed;

CONSIDERING that the population of European Eel is considered a single stock so that the provisions included in this Recommendation shall contribute to the recovery of the species;

CONSIDERING that the specific life cycle traits of catadromous species such as the European eel call for specific management measures;

ADOPTS, in accordance with Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement), the following recommendation:

PART I

General objectives, geographical scope and definitions

General objectives of the multi-annual plan

1. This recommendation establishes a multi-annual management plan for the fisheries catching European eel (*Anguilla anguilla* L.) in the Mediterranean Sea, in line with the precautionary approach to fisheries management. It shall be designed to provide and maintain high long-term yields and to guarantee a low risk of stock collapse while maintaining sustainable and relatively stable fisheries.

2. Contracting parties (CPCs) in the territory of which fishing activities catch European eel in the area referred to in paragraph 1 agree to implement such a multi-annual management plan for the fisheries concerned, in accordance with the general and specific objectives and measures set by this recommendation.

3. With due regard to the critical state of the European eel stock as reported by the SAC and the ensuing urgency to restore the conservation state of this stock, CPCs agree that all activities catching European eel should be covered by this plan, namely targeted, incidental and recreational catches.
4. A set of transitional precautionary management measures shall be developed in order to address the immediate need to decrease fishing mortality and to ensure that the stock is kept at biologically sustainable levels in the long term.
5. CPCs may take into account in their management measures other anthropogenic mortalities factors in order to reduce their impact on eels and increase their probability of the escapement to the sea, as well as including restocking or translocation practices.
6. Upon adequate data collection, the SAC shall issue an advice on long-term measures in accordance with the objectives set out in paragraph 1.
7. On the basis of SAC advice, the GFCM shall adapt and complement as appropriate the transitional precautionary management measures in order to meet the objectives set out in paragraph 1.
8. This multi-annual management plan shall be applied in a fair, timely, transparent and non-discriminatory manner, consistent with international law, and without prejudice to stricter or broader-encompassing measures that may already be established by CPCs in national management plans.

Geographical scope

9. The multi-annual management plan established by this Recommendation shall apply to all marine waters of the Mediterranean Sea.
10. Taking into account the specificities of the life cycle of the European eel, and the importance to include the management measures foreseen in all the habitats where fishing activities occur, CPCs agree to include freshwaters and transitional brackish waters, such as lagoons and estuaries, within the scope of this Recommendation.

Definitions

11. For the purpose of this recommendation, the following definitions shall apply:

- a) “European eel” means fish belonging to the species *Anguilla anguilla* Linnaeus;
- b) “Mediterranean Sea” means Geographical Sub-Areas (GSAs) 1 to 27 included, as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2 on the establishment of geographical subareas in the GFCM area of application, amending Resolution GFCM/31/2007/2;
- c) “recreational fishing” means a non-commercial fishing activity exploiting marine living resources for recreation, tourism or sport;
- d) “illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing” or “IUU fishing” means the activities mentioned in paragraph 3 of the 2001 FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing;
- e) “authorised landing point” means a port or place close to the shore and designated by the CPCs where landing of eel catches is authorised;
- f) “fishing authorization” means a special authorization granted by legal authorities and entitling a natural or legal person or fishing vessel to engage in commercial fishing activities catching European eel, whether these catches are targeted during a specified period or in a given area;

- g) “closure period” means a specific period of the day or of the year when fishing activities resulting in landings of European eel are prohibited;
- h) “DCRF manual” means the manual prepared by the SAC and endorsed by the Commission at its thirty-ninth session, and resulting from the implementation of the Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF).

PART II

Specific objectives

12. This recommendation sets up a multi-annual management plan for the European eel (*Anguilla anguilla* L.). The operational objective of this plan is to contribute to controlling the fishing mortality and ensuring the long-term conservation and long-term sustainable use of this species in the Mediterranean Sea, in accordance with Article 2 of the GFCM Agreement and paragraph 1 of this plan.

13. The objective of the transitional precautionary management measures is to adjust immediately the fishing mortality levels together with other possible measures and to address the critical state of the stock, as mentioned in Part III of this Recommendation.

14. The transitional management measures shall also prepare the ground for a future management plan while reducing the risk that, in the absence of scientific assessment, the stock biomass should drop to extremely low levels, jeopardizing the economic viability of the fisheries exploiting European eel.

15. The plan shall ensure that relevant data concerning European eel and the fisheries exploiting it are collected by the DCRF and that scientific research is conducted in order, *inter alia*, to identify long-term management measures.

16. The plan shall ensure that, upon the timely provision of scientific advice by the SAC, the GFCM reviews and adapts the short-term management measures, if appropriate.

17. The plan shall finally pursue the reduction of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities in its area of application.

PART III

Transitional management measures

Transitional management measures

18. In the short term, the CPCs shall implement an effort or catches reduction of at least 30% of European eel as compared to the reference period 2006-2008 or another 3-year reference period defined by the CPCs. This reduction shall apply on a progressive basis of an annual 10% reduction over a period of 3 years starting on 1 January 2019, the year immediately following the GFCM 42nd session. The reference period shall be without prejudice to the discussions to take place in the context of the working group referred to under paragraph 33 of this recommendation and shall not prejudice from the definition of a future reference period. Where national management plans resulting in effort or catch reductions of at least 30% have been implemented before the entry into force of this Recommendation, the reference period may be the one designated in the national management plan.

19. CPCs shall set up an annual fishing closure of 3 consecutive months where landing European eel shall be prohibited. In order to decrease fishing mortality effectively, the closure period shall be defined by the CPCs in their national management plan, together with its fisheries and the gears targeting eel. The fishing closure period shall be consistent with the objective set up in paragraph 18, with national management plans in place and with the temporal migration patterns of European eel in the CPC concerned.

20. CPCs may set up fisheries restricted areas (FRAs) within the geographical scope of this Recommendation to further the protection of European eel. It shall be prohibited to land catches of European eel made in the FRAs and specimen accidentally captured shall be immediately released upon their catch. The location and boundaries of the FRAs shall be consistent with the provisions set up in paragraph 18 and with the distribution of the main habitats of European eel in the CPC concerned.

National management plans and national management measures

21. National management plans and national management measures already in force in the territories under the jurisdiction of the CPCs shall be communicated to the GFCM Secretariat by 31 January 2019 at the latest.

22. CPCs which do not have national measures in force shall adopt by 30 June 2019 a minimum set of measures consistent with paragraphs 18 to 20, and shall communicate them to the GFCM Secretariat by 31 January 2020 at the latest.

23. The national management plans adopted by the CPCs shall establish technical measures, such as the fishing gears and the mesh size authorised.

24. CPCs may adopt voluntary measures to complement this plan. These voluntary measures may take into account *inter alia* the conservation state of European eel in their waters, the impact of fishing activities catching European eel in their waters and relevant context specific to the said CPC, such as other anthropogenic mortality sources.

25. These measures shall be communicated to the Secretariat of the GFCM within one (1) month of their entry into force.

PART IV

Data collection, scientific research programme and review clause

Data collection

26. Data available with the CPCs and referred to in the DCRF manual, including past data dating as far back as possible and the areas where European eel is known or likely to occur in their respective waters under the scope of this Recommendation, shall be transmitted to the GFCM no later than its 43rd session. The areas where European eel is known or likely to occur shall be defined, where possible, by closed polygons, where the summits' coordinates use the WGS 84 spatial coordinate system. CPCs are encouraged to provide maps illustrating these areas, using the same spatial coordinate system.

27. Where recreational fishing and/or IUU fisheries are known to occur, the data available, including estimates, shall also be transmitted to the GFCM Secretariat no later than its 43rd session.

28. The CPCs shall transmit to the GFCM Secretariat the data pertaining to restocking activities, as well as data pertaining to fattening activities in accordance with the deadlines set in Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/6.

29. CPCs may also transmit to the GFCM Secretariat any additional information on a voluntary basis, if possible no later than the 43rd session of the GFCM.

Scientific research programme

30. The GFCM Secretariat, with the support of the SAC, shall provide terms of reference, including costs, services and other requirements to support the implementation of a research programme on European eel in the Mediterranean Sea, in line with the one described in Appendix 7 of the report of the nineteenth session of the SAC. The research programme shall be launched in 2019 and be completed in

2021, at the latest 6 months before the 45th session of the GFCM.

Review clause

31. This plan shall be assessed by the SAC and, if necessary, reviewed by the GFCM at its 45st session.

PART V

Working group, assessment by the SAC and adoption of measures allowing the attainment of the long-term objectives

32. CPCs shall report on the implementation of the multi-annual management plan to the GFCM in 2021, no later than its 45th session. If national measures were implemented, their assessment should be included in this report. If possible, the CPCs are encouraged to provide an estimate of the respective impacts of the multi-annual management plan and of their voluntary measures.

Working group

33. A working group shall be established to examine management measures for eel. The tasks of the working group are defined in annex to this Recommendation.

Assessment by the SAC

34. In 2023, no later than 6 months before the 47th session of the GFCM, the SAC shall advise on appropriate measures allowing the attainment of the long-term objectives set out in paragraph 1. To this effect, the SAC shall issue an advice taking into account the CPCs' reports, the result of the scientific research programme, the output of the working group, the data collected in the DCRF framework and the characteristics of the European eel conservation status and of the fisheries in the territories of the Parties. The SAC, while taking due account of the specificities of the eel fisheries in the CPCs, shall *inter alia*, advise on the effectiveness of the management measures referred to in Part III, on suitable catch limits or effort measures, on the minimum size(s), on appropriate technical measures, such as mesh and hooks size(s), and on other possible measures resulting in selectivity improvements.

Adoption of measures allowing the attainment of the long-term objectives

35. In 2023, during the 47th session of the GFCM, the CPCs shall adopt long-term management measures allowing the attainment of the objectives set out in paragraph 1, in complement to or in replacement for the measures referred to in Part III.

PART VI

Fishing authorizations, landings and measures to fight IUU fishing: catch registration, traceability, control

Fishing authorizations

36. The authorization to land catches of European eel shall be conditioned to the granting of a fishing authorization, in accordance with the national management plans in place. Fishing authorizations shall be subject to the provisions set out in Part III and the CPCs shall maintain an update register.

37. By 1 January 2020, each CPC shall establish a list of all fishing vessels flying its flag authorized to fish eel in their respective waters under the scope of this Recommendation, irrespective of the overall length of the vessel.

38. By 1 January 2020, each CPC shall establish a list of all authorized transitional and brackish waters, such as lagoons and estuaries, where traditional permanent fish-harvesting static gears used to catch eel are in place.

39. Authorizations referred to in points 36 to 38 shall be transmitted to the Secretariat of GFCM by 30 June 2020 and updated regularly.

Landings

40. Landings of European eel shall only be authorized in landing points designated for this purpose. The CPCs shall communicate the list of these landing points to the GFCM no later than its 43rd session.

41. By way of derogation from paragraph 40, CPCs may put in place measures alternative to designated landing points provided that they contribute effectively to fighting IUU fishing.

Measures to fight IUU fishing: catch registration, control and traceability

42. CPCs shall ensure that the fishers or masters of the vessels authorized to harvest European eel have the obligation to record their catches in live weight.

43. CPCs shall ensure that, in the special case of transitional and brackish waters such as lagoons and estuaries where eel catching continues to be carried out with permanent traditional fish-harvesting static gears, authorized operators have the obligation to record catches in live weight.

44. Without prejudice to paragraph 2 of Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1 concerning the establishment of a GFCM logbook et amending Recommendation GFCM/34/2010/1, each CPC shall put in place a mechanism to record periodically in the logbook all European eel daily catches, irrespective of the live weight of the harvest.

The CPCs shall set up a traceability system for landings, sales and exports allowing the catches to be traced from the authorized landing point to the final destination, whether the specimen are sold alive, dead or transformed.

45. By 1 January 2020, each CPC shall establish a list of auction halls or other bodies or persons authorized by this CPC to undertake the first marketing of eels.

Recreational eel fishing

46. The CPCs shall establish on a regular basis an estimate of the number of recreational fishermen and their catches of glass, yellow and silver eel.

PART VII Final provisions

Entry into force

47. National measures or measures referred to in Part III shall not derogate to or weaken the provisions agreed by the Parties under this multi-annual management plan but complement them in a view to increasing the recovery rate of the stock of European eel.

48. The plan does not prevent the Parties from adopting more stringent national measures.

49. Developing countries intending to develop their European eel fishery shall present a development plan including a management plan based on this Recommendation which shall be assessed by the SAC no later than 30 June 2020. If the development plans are not in line with the general and specific objectives set out in this multi-annual management plan, the SAC shall issue recommendations, taking into account the specificities of the developing country in question.

Terms of reference for the working group on eel

The working group referred to in paragraph 33 shall:

- 1) be supported by the GFCM;
- 2) establish a working plan for the development of its work and hold at least one meeting during 2019, before the next meeting of the SAC;
- 3) invite observers attending GFCM meetings, the FAO, and other regional fisheries management organizations to participate in its meetings; and
- 4) report its conclusions and opinions to the SAC.

Based on the information collected under Parts III and IV of this Recommendation, the working group shall advise the SAC at the latest in 2022 on appropriate management measures allowing the attainment of the objectives referred to in paragraph 1 of this Recommendation. While taking due account of the specificities of the eel fisheries in the CPCs, it shall, *inter alia*, advise the SAC on the effectiveness of the management measures referred to in Part III, on suitable catch limits or effort measures, on the minimum size(s), on appropriate technical measures, such as mesh and hooks size(s), and on other possible measures resulting in selectivity improvements.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/2 on fisheries management measures for the conservation of sharks and rays in the GFCM area of application, amending Recommendation GFCM/36/2012/3

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

RECALLING that the objectives of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean are to promote the development, conservation, rational management and proper utilization of living marine resources;

RECALLING the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development of 2002 and in particular its Plan of Implementation;

RECALLING the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference for Sustainable Development of the Fisheries in the Mediterranean held in Venice on 2003;

REAFFIRMING the principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and recalling the precautionary and ecosystem approach to fishery management;

RECALLING the FAO International Plan of action for the Conservation and the management of Sharks (IPOA-sharks);

RECALLING the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and the listing of some sharks species in either Annex II or Annex III of its Protocol concerning the Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (hereinafter SPA/BD Protocol);

NOTING the importance of harmonizing conservation and management measures with other international conventions responsible for the protection of these species;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the SAC advice and in particular the needs for species identification and to ensure better conservation status to sharks including protection of coastal areas from most active fishing gear;

ADOPTS in conformity with the provision of Article III paragraph 1 (b) and (h) and Article V of the GFCM Agreement that:

PART I

Scope

1. Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-contracting Parties of the GFCM (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall ensure that sharks are kept on board, transhipped, landed and marketed at first sale in a way that species are recognizable and identifiable and catches, incidental takings and, whenever appropriate, releases by species can be monitored and recorded.
2. CPCs shall adopt fisheries management measures to ensure adequate conservation status to sharks.

Definitions

3. For the purposes of this Recommendation the following definitions shall apply:

‘Shark’ means any fish of the taxon *Elasmobranchii*

‘Shark fins’ means any fins of sharks including caudal fins, but excluding the pectoral fins of rays, which are a constituent part of ray wings;

‘trawl nets’ means nets which are actively towed by the main boat engine and consisting of a cone- or pyramid-shaped body (as trawl body) closed at the back by a cod-end and which can extend at the opening by the wings or can be mounted on a rigid frame. Horizontal opening is either obtained by otter boards or provided by a beam or frame of variable shape and size. Such nets can be towed either on the bottom (bottom trawl net) or in midwater (pelagic trawl net);

PART II

Fisheries management measures

4. CPCs shall ensure that:
 - it shall be prohibited to remove shark fins on board vessels and to retain, tranship or land shark fins.
 - in order to facilitate on-board storage, shark fins may be partially sliced through and folded against the carcass, but shall not be removed from the carcass before landing.
 - beheading and skinning of specimens on board and before landing shall be prohibited. Beheaded and skinned sharks cannot be marketed at the first sale markets after landing;
 - It shall be prohibited to purchase, offer for sale or sell shark fins which have been removed, retained on board, transhipped or landed in contravention of this Recommendation.
5. Reduction of trawl fishing in coastal areas to enhance protection of coastal sharks
 - A. CPCs shall ensure that fishing activities carried out with trawl nets are prohibited within 3 nautical miles off the coast, provided that the 50 meters isobath is not reached, or within the 50 meters isobath where that depth is reached at a shorter distance from the coast.
 - B. Specific and spatially limited derogation may be granted by the Members on condition that affects a limited number of vessels and provided that such derogation:
 - a) is justified by particular geographical constraints, such as the limited size of continental shelf along the entire coastline of a Member State or the limited extent of trawlable fishing grounds due to different causes;
and/or
 - b) concerns small trawl vessels of less than or equal to 12 metres overall length and engine power of less than or equal to 85 kW traditionally carried out in coastal areas;
or
 - c) concerns a limited number of vessels during a seasonal fishing campaign;
and
 - d) has no significant impact on the marine environment.
 - C. CPCs shall inform the GFCM on the modalities of applying the derogation under point B) no later than 31 March. This notification shall include:
 - a) a list of authorised trawl fishing vessels with their characteristics,
 - b) zones as identified by geographic coordinates both on land and at sea and by GFCM statistical rectangles as defined in Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1.
 - c) Measures taken to monitor and mitigate impact on marine environment

- D. CPCs shall establish a specific monitoring plan for the trawl fisheries operating under derogation as stipulated by point B).
- E. These provisions are without prejudice to more detailed or stricter rules implemented by Members.

Elasmobranchs species under Annex II (list of endangered or threatened species) and Annex III (list of species whose exploitation is regulated) of the SPA/BD Protocol to the Barcelona Convention

- 6. CPCs shall ensure a high protection from fishing activities to elasmobranchs species listed in Annex II of the SPA/BD protocol of the Barcelona Convention that must be released unharmed and alive to the extent possible.
- 7. Specimens of sharks' species listed in Annex II of the SPA/BD Protocol cannot be retained on board, transhipped, landed, transferred, stored, sold or displayed or offered for sale.
- 8. CPCs shall ensure that catches of tope shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*) taken with bottom- set nets, longlines and in tuna traps shall be promptly released unharmed and alive to the extent possible.

**PART III
Monitoring, data collection and research**

- 9. CPCs shall ensure that:
 - a) information on fishing activities, catch data, incidental taking, release and/or discarding events for sharks species listed either in Annex II or III of the SPA/BD Protocol, must be recorded by the ship-owners in the logbook or equivalent document, in line with requirements of Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1 establishing the GFCM logbook;
 - b) this information must be reported to the national authorities for notification to GFCM Secretariat within the annual national reporting to SAC and through the Task 1;
 - c) any other additional measures are taken to improve data gathering in view of scientific monitoring of the species.
- 10. As appropriate, the GFCM and its CPCs should, individually and collectively, engage in capacity building efforts and other research cooperative activities to improve knowledge on sharks and sharks fisheries and to support the effective implementation of this recommendation, including entering into cooperative arrangements with other appropriate international bodies.
- 11. The provisions referred to in Paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are without prejudice to stricter rules implemented by the CPCs.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/3 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting for the giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Levant Sea (geographical subareas 24, 25, 26 and 27)

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve the marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a sub-regional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks at levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY);

RECALLING that the 2017 Malta Ministerial Declaration towards enhanced cooperation on Mediterranean Sea fisheries and aquaculture ("MedFish4Ever Declaration") requires that, in the context of establishing an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework, all key fisheries should be managed with management plans;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

CONSIDERING that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that States "should apply the precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, taking account of the best scientific evidence available. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take measures to conserve target species, associated or dependent species and non-target species and their environment";

CONSIDERING that all measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

RECALLING that the MedFish4Ever Declaration towards enhanced cooperation on Mediterranean Sea fisheries and aquaculture calls upon Mediterranean Sea riparian countries to enhance multilateral cooperation and implement actions to improve the sustainability of resources, particularly with regard to data collection and scientific advice, implementation of an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework, compliance and elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, support of sustainable small-scale fisheries and aquaculture and greater solidarity and coordination;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;

RECALLING Decision GFCM/36/2012/1 on guidelines on a general management framework and presentation of scientific information for multiannual management plans for sustainable fisheries in the GFCM area of application;

CONSIDERING the advice of the Twentieth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) on adopting management rules (e.g. fishing authorizations) on these two species;

CONSIDERING that fishing mortality should be kept below safe thresholds to ensure long-term high yields while limiting the risk of stocks collapse and guaranteeing stable and more viable fisheries;

CONSIDERING the socio-economic importance of fisheries and the need to ensure their sustainability;

CONSIDERING that certain fisheries management measures need to be revised and adapted to the evolution of both the status of exploited stocks and scientific knowledge and that an appropriate method to this end shall be established;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5b, 8b, and 13 of the GFCM Agreement the following Recommendation:

PART I

General objectives, scope and definitions

General objectives of the multiannual plan and transitional measures

1. The present recommendation establishes a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawling fishing activities in the Levant Sea (GFCM Geographical sub-areas GSAs 24, 25, 26 and 27). This multi-annual management plan contains transitional measures that shall apply until the adoption of permanent measures based on scientific advice provided by the GFCM Scientific Advice Committee (SAC), in accordance with paragraph 14.
2. The multiannual management plan shall be consistent with the precautionary approach. It shall be designed to provide high long-term yields consistent with the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and to guarantee a low risk of stocks collapse while maintaining sustainable and relatively stable fisheries.
3. Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) whose vessels are actively fishing in GFCM GSAs 24, 25, 26 and 27 agree to implement such a multiannual management plan for the fisheries concerned and in accordance with the general and specific objectives and measures set by this recommendation.
4. A set of transitional precautionary management measures for the Levant Sea shall be developed in order to ensure that, pending formal scientific advice by the SAC, the stocks and fisheries are kept at biologically sustainable levels.
5. The CPCs whose vessels are actively fishing in GFCM GSAs 24, 25, 26 and 27 agree to implement such transitional management measures for the fisheries concerned and in accordance with the general and specific objectives set by this recommendation.
6. The multiannual management plan for the fisheries shall also pursue the reduction in Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (hereafter IUU) fishing activities in the GFCM GSAs 24, 25, 26 and 27.

Geographical scope

7. The multiannual management plan provided by the present recommendation shall apply in the GFCM GSAs 24, 25, 26 and 27.

Definitions

8. For the purpose of this Recommendation:

- a) 'Levant Sea' means the GFCM geographical subareas 24, 25, 26 and 27 as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2;
- b) 'Vessel actively fishing' means any trawler targeting the key species listed in Annex I and entitled by the CPC whose flag it is flying to carry out specific fishing operations, during a specified period, in a given area or for a given fishery under specific conditions;
- c) 'Fishing day' means any continuous period of 24 hours, or part thereof, during which a vessel is present within the GSAs 24, 25, 26 and 27 and is searching for fish, shooting, setting, towing, hauling of a fishing gear, taking catch on board, transshipping, retaining on board, processing on board, transferring and landing of fish and fishery products;
- d) 'Key species' means marine organisms pertaining to the species as defined in Annex I of the current recommendation;
- e) 'Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing' or 'IUU fishing' means the activities set out in paragraph 3 of the 2001 FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, hereinafter referred to as "IUU fishing" and following the provisions of the recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;
- f) 'Designated landing point' means ports, or places close to the shore, designated by the contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) according to Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/1 on a regional scheme on port state measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application, including offshore terminals and other installations for landing, transshipping, packaging, processing, refuelling or resupplying of fishing vessels, where landings, transshipments, packaging and/or processing operations of fishery products are permitted.

PART II

Specific objectives of the multiannual management plan and the transitional measures for the Levant Sea

9. The operational objective of this plan shall be to maintain fishing mortality for key species of annex I, defined by CPCs with the assistance of GFCM, within agreed precautionary reference points, with a view to achieving or maintaining fishing mortality at MSY level, in accordance with the objectives described in Part 1 of this Recommendation.

10. The objective of the transitional measures for key species (annex I) in the Levant Sea is to prepare for a future management plan while reducing the risk that, in the absence of relevant scientific

assessment, the biomass level of the stocks could drop below biologically sustainable level values with negative consequences also on the socio-economic viability of the fisheries concerned.

11. Pending the identification of biological reference points in line with the MSY, the general objectives of the plan set out in paragraph 1 shall be attained while maintaining the fishing fleet capacity or fishing effort at the levels authorized and exerted during the years 2014-2017 for the exploitation of key species in the Levant Sea. This reference period shall be without prejudice to the discussions to take place in the context of the working group referred to under paragraph 49 of this recommendation.

12. A GFCM Working Group shall be established in 2020, thirty calendar days following the 2020 SAC session, in order to develop measures for the management of key species (annex I), taking into consideration the efforts made by CPCs to manage the relevant fisheries, the amount of historical catches and apply in some cases stricter rules than those defined in this recommendation, also based on socio-economic considerations.

13. By way of derogation from point 11, CPCs which intend to target the key species referred to in Annex I will be allowed to submit Fleet Development Plans during the time period between the entry into force of this Recommendation and the adoption of permanent management measures by the GFCM. Such Fleet Development Plans shall be assessed by the SAC and adopted by the GFCM.

14. The SAC shall, upon the availability of updated data, regularly assess the state of the key species and in particular, establish the level of current fishing mortality and provide the GFCM with the necessary elements for setting biological reference points.

15. Operational objectives in terms of fighting against IUU fishing activities which are relevant for the key species' fisheries shall be developed as defined in part VI of this Recommendation.

16. During its 44th session, the GFCM shall adopt long-term management measures allowing the attainment of the objectives set out in paragraph 1, in complement to or in replacement for the measures referred to in Part IV.

PART III

Scientific monitoring, adaptation and revision of the plan

17. CPCs shall ensure annually an adequate scientific monitoring of the status of the key species in the Levant Sea.

18. The SAC shall provide, on annual basis as from 2019, advice on the status of the key species in Levant Sea including specific objectives to maintain fishing mortality within agreed precautionary fishing mortality reference points and to maintain or restore the stocks of key species at levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield in accordance with the objectives set out in paragraph 1.

19. The SAC shall assess the biological, economic and social implications of implementing several management scenarios with the objective of restoring and maintaining the species' population above levels which can produce the MSY.

20. Based on the SAC advice, the GFCM may review the content of the multiannual management plan.

21. Where SAC advice indicates that the general or specific objectives of the multi-annual plan are

not being met, the GFCM shall decide on additional and/or alternative management measures to contribute to achieving those objectives.

22. Where, for any reason (*e.g.* lack of appropriate data), the SAC is not in a position of providing an accurate advice on the stock status of the key species of annex I and on their exploitation levels, the GFCM shall decide on the most appropriate management measures to ensure sustainability of the fisheries. These measures shall be based on SAC advice in accordance with the precautionary approach and taking into consideration environmental and socio-economic elements' in a way that guarantees the sustainability of the fisheries.

23. In 2020, the SAC shall evaluate the effectiveness of the measures already applied at national level and advise on whether these measures are adequate and if they could be applicable to the adjacent GSAs.

24. For the purpose of providing advice for the development of the multi-annual management plan, the CPCs and the SAC will facilitate the collation of existing relevant data and the collection of additional relevant data (including research survey data) and organise adequate workshops. For this purpose, the SAC shall promote scientific cooperation and a harmonised approach amongst all Levant Sea riparian countries.

PART IV Fleet Management measures

25. Vessels authorised to fish the key species of annex I in the Levant Sea shall be listed by the CPC whose flag they are flying. Vessels not listed by the CPC whose flag they are flying shall not catch, retain on board, tranship, land, store or sell the key species.

26. CPCs shall communicate to GFCM Secretariat not later than 31 January of each year, the list of the vessels flying their flag and actively fishing for the key species listed in Annex I for the current year or forthcoming years. This list shall include, for each vessel, the information referred to in annex I of Recommendation [GFCM/39/2015/2].

27. The vessels actively fishing for the key species listed in Annex I shall comply with the obligations established in Resolution GFCM/37/2013/2 and provide a detailed report of their fishing activities to national authorities, including as minimum requirements: the operating days, the operating area and the total catch of key species. This information shall be transmitted to the GFCM Secretariat at least yearly.

28. CPCs may designate additional spatial/temporal restrictions, with respect to those already established, in which fishing activities may be banned or restricted in order to protect aggregation areas of juveniles of the key species. Where applicable, CPCs shall notify to the GFCM Secretariat, by 1 January 2019 the list of these areas and the restrictions applied.

PART V Management of fishing effort

29. CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat for first time, no later than 1 June 2019 the list of all vessels actively fishing the key species listed in Annex I and their historic level of fishing effort.

30. Such list shall contain, for each vessel, the information referred to in annex I of Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2.

31. Any fishing vessel not included in the list established under point 26 above shall not be allowed to fish for, retain on board or land any quantity of the key species greater than 3 percent of the total live weight catch retained on board, if the vessel is engaged on a fishing trip in any of the GSAs 24, 25, 26 or 27.

32. CPCs shall promptly notify the GFCM Secretariat of any addition to, any deletion from and/or any modification of the fishing fleets for key species, as identified under paragraph 27, at any time such changes may occur.

33. The GFCM Secretariat shall maintain and update the list of fishing vessels authorised to fish for the key species and publish it on the GFCM website in a manner consistent with GFCM data confidentiality policy and procedures.

34. Each CPC shall ensure to set up adequate mechanisms for the recording of each fishing vessel in a national fleet register, for the recording of vessel's catches and fishing effort via both the logbook and, remote sensing as well as for the monitoring of fishing vessels activities and landings via catch and effort sampling surveys according to the rules stipulated by each CPC.

35. The above provisions are without prejudice to Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 concerning minimum standards for the establishment of a vessel monitoring system in the GFCM area of application.

PART VI

Specific measures to address IUU fishing activities

36. CPCs shall establish a mechanism to ensure that vessels actively fishing in the Levant Sea declare all catches and by-catches of the key species listed in Annex I. The obligation to declare catches will apply irrespective of the volume of the catch.

37. CPCs shall, no later than 31 December 2020, communicate to the Secretariat of the GFCM a map of the fishing grounds exploited by their vessels authorised to catch the key species listed in Annex I. Such map shall be prepared using the VMS data transmitted to the CPCs by their authorised vessels.

38. Each CPC shall designate landing points in which landings by vessels actively fishing for the key species in the Levant Sea shall take place.

39. For each designated port, the CPC shall specify permitted landing and transshipping times and places.

40. CPCs shall carry out inspections shall take place on the basis of a risk analysis.

41. It shall be prohibited to land or tranship from fishing vessels any quantity of key species fished in the Levant Sea at any place other than ports designated by CPCs in accordance with paragraph 38 above.

42. CPCs shall transmit to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 30 November each year, any changes to the list of the designated landing points in which landings of key species in Levant Sea may take place.

43. CPCs shall engage to cooperate in the fight against IUU activities, in particular through sharing information and gathering intelligence to fight against illegal activities.

44. Part VI is without prejudice to Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application.

PART VII

Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) programme

45. All vessels above 10 metres length overall actively fishing the key species listed in Annex I shall be equipped with vessel monitoring system (VMS) or any other system of geo-positioning allowing control authorities to track their activities.

46. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1 concerning the establishment of a GFCM Logbook, all key species catches shall be indicated in the logbook irrespectively of the live weight of the catch.

47. Upon request of CPCs with the assistance of the GFCM secretariat, the GFCM shall establish in 2019 a pilot project with a view to establishing an observation and inspection programme in order to ensure compliance with the conservation and management measures contained in this Recommendation.

48. Such observation and inspection programme shall be based on the results of the pilot project and adopted before the end of 2020. It shall comprise, *inter alia*, the following elements:

- a) High seas inspection;
- b) Procedures for an effective investigation of an alleged violation of the conservation and management measures contained in this recommendation, and for reporting to the GFCM on the actions taken, including procedures for exchanging information;
- c) Provisions for appropriate action to be taken when inspections reveal serious violations as well as the expedient and transparent follow-up of such actions in order to uphold the flag State's responsibility within the intended programme;
- d) Port inspections;
- e) Monitoring of landings and catches, including statistical follow-up for management purposes;
- f) Specific monitoring programmes, including boarding and inspection;
- g) Observer programmes

49. A working group shall be established to develop integrated MCS measures, in accordance with this recommendation. The tasks of this working group are defined in annex II of this Recommendation.

List of key species to be considered in the current recommendation

Name	Scientific name	GSA			
		24	25	26	27
Giant red shrimp	<i>Aristaeomorpha foliacea</i>	X	X	X	X
Blue and red shrimp	<i>Aristeus antennatus</i>	X	X	X	X

Terms of reference for the Working Group on integrated MCS measures for fisheries targeting key species in the Levant Sea

The Working Group referred to in paragraph 49, shall:

- 1) be supported by the GFCM Secretariat;
- 2) establish a time schedule for the development of its work, and will hold at least one meeting during 2019, before the next meeting of the GFCM Compliance Committee (CoC);
- 3) invite observers attending GFCM meetings, the FAO, and other regional fisheries organizations to participate in its meetings; and
- 4) report its conclusions and opinions to the CoC.

The mandate of the Working Group will cover the elements as described in part VII of this recommendation.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/4 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Ionian Sea (geographical subareas 19, 20 and 21)

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve the marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a sub-regional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks at levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY);

RECALLING that the 2017 Malta Ministerial Declaration towards enhanced cooperation on Mediterranean Sea fisheries and aquaculture ("MedFish4Ever Declaration") requires that, in the context of establishing an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework, all key fisheries should be managed with management plans;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

CONSIDERING that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that States "should apply the precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, taking account of the best scientific evidence available. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take measures to conserve target species, associated or dependent species and non-target species and their environment";

CONSIDERING that all measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

RECALLING that the MedFish4Ever Declaration towards enhanced cooperation on Mediterranean Sea fisheries and aquaculture calls upon Mediterranean Sea riparian countries to enhance multilateral cooperation and implement actions to improve the sustainability of resources, particularly with regard to data collection and scientific advice, implementation of an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework, compliance and elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, support of sustainable small-scale fisheries and aquaculture and greater solidarity and coordination;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;

RECALLING Decision GFCM/36/2012/1 on guidelines on a general management framework and presentation of scientific information for multiannual management plans for sustainable fisheries in the GFCM area of application;

CONSIDERING the advice of the Twentieth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) on adopting management rules (e.g. fishing authorizations) on these two species;

CONSIDERING that fishing mortality should be kept below safe thresholds to ensure long-term high yields while limiting the risk of stocks collapse and guaranteeing stable and more viable fisheries;

CONSIDERING the socio-economic importance of fisheries and the need to ensure their sustainability;

CONSIDERING that certain fisheries management measures need to be revised and adapted to the evolution of both the status of exploited stocks and scientific knowledge and that an appropriate method to this end shall be established;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5b, 8b, and 13 of the GFCM Agreement the following Recommendation:

PART I

General objectives, scope and definitions

General objectives of the multiannual plan and transitional measures

1. The present recommendation establishes a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawling fishing activities in the Ionian Sea (GFCM Geographical sub-areas GSAs 19, 20 and 21). This multi-annual management plan contains transitional measures that shall apply until the adoption of permanent measures based on scientific advice provided by the GFCM Scientific Advice Committee (SAC), in accordance with paragraph 14.
2. The multiannual management plan shall be consistent with the precautionary approach. It shall be designed to provide high long-term yields consistent with the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and to guarantee a low risk of stocks collapse while maintaining sustainable and relatively stable fisheries.
3. Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) whose vessels are actively fishing in GFCM GSAs 19, 20 and 21 agree to implement such a multiannual management plan for the fisheries concerned and in accordance with the general and specific objectives and measures set by this recommendation.
4. A set of transitional precautionary management measures for the Ionian Sea shall be developed in order to ensure that, pending formal scientific advice by the SAC, the stocks and fisheries are kept at biologically sustainable levels.
5. The CPCs whose vessels are actively fishing in GFCM GSAs 19, 20 and 21 agree to implement such transitional management measures for the fisheries concerned and in accordance with the general and specific objectives set by this recommendation.
6. The multiannual management plan for the fisheries shall also pursue the reduction in Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (hereafter IUU) fishing activities in the GFCM GSAs 19, 20 and 21.

Geographical scope

7. The multiannual management plan provided by the present recommendation shall apply in the GFCM GSAs 19, 20 and 21.

Definitions

8. For the purpose of this Recommendation:

- g) 'Ionian Sea' means the GFCM geographical subareas 19, 20 and 21 as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2;
- h) 'Vessel actively fishing' means any trawler targeting in the Ionian sea the key species listed in Annex I and entitled by the CPC whose flag it is flying to carry out specific fishing operations, during a specified period, in a given area or for a given fishery under specific conditions;
- i) 'Fishing day' means any continuous period of 24 hours, or part thereof, during which a vessel is present within the GSAs 19, 20 and 21 and is searching for fish, shooting, setting, towing, hauling of a fishing gear, taking catch on board, transshipping, retaining on board, processing on board, transferring and landing of fish and fishery products;
- j) 'Key species' means marine organisms pertaining to the species as defined in Annex I of the current recommendation;
- k) 'Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing' or 'IUU fishing' means the activities set out in paragraph 3 of the 2001 FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, hereinafter referred to as "IUU fishing" and following the provisions of the recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;
- l) 'Designated landing point' means ports, or places close to the shore, designated by the contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) according to Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/1 on a regional scheme on port state measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application, including offshore terminals and other installations for landing, transshipping, packaging, processing, refuelling or resupplying of fishing vessels, where landings, transshipments, packaging and/or processing operations of fishery products are permitted.

PART II

Specific objectives of the multiannual management plan and the transitional measures for the Ionian Sea

9. The operational objective of this plan shall be to maintain fishing mortality for key species of annex I, defined by CPCs with the assistance of GFCM, within agreed precautionary reference points, with a view to achieving or maintaining fishing mortality at MSY level, in accordance with the objectives described in Part 1 of this Recommendation.

10. The objective of the transitional measures for key species (Annex I) in the Ionian Sea is to prepare for a future management plan while reducing the risk that, in the absence of relevant scientific

assessment, the biomass level of the stocks could drop below biologically sustainable level values with negative consequences also on the socio-economic viability of the fisheries concerned.

11. Pending the identification of biological reference points in line with the MSY, the general objectives of the plan set out in paragraph 1 shall be attained while maintaining the fishing fleet capacity or fishing effort at the levels authorized and exerted during the years 2014-2017 for the exploitation of key species in the Ionian Sea. This reference period shall be without prejudice to the discussions to take place in the context of the working group referred to under paragraph 49 of this recommendation.

12. A GFCM Working Group shall be established in 2020, thirty calendar days following the 2020 SAC session, in order to develop measures for the management of key species (annex I), taking into consideration the efforts made by CPCs to manage the relevant fisheries, the amount of historical catches and apply in some cases stricter rules than those defined in this recommendation, also based on socio-economic considerations.

13. By way of derogation from point 11, CPCs which intend to target the key species referred to in Annex I will be allowed to submit Fleet Development Plans. Such Fleet Development Plans shall be assessed by the SAC and adopted by the GFCM.

14. The SAC shall, upon the availability of updated data, regularly assess the state of the key species and in particular, establish the level of current fishing mortality and provide the GFCM with the necessary elements for setting biological reference points.

15. Operational objectives in terms of fighting against IUU fishing activities which are relevant for the key species' fisheries shall be developed as defined in part VI of this Recommendation.

16. During its 44th session, the GFCM shall adopt long-term management measures allowing the attainment of the objectives set out in paragraph 1, in complement to or in replacement for the measures referred to in Part IV.

PART III

Scientific monitoring, adaptation and revision of the plan

17. CPCs shall ensure annually an adequate scientific monitoring of the status of the key species in the Ionian Sea.

18. The SAC shall provide, on annual basis as from 2019, advice on the status of the key species in Ionian Sea including specific objectives to maintain fishing mortality within agreed precautionary fishing mortality reference points and to maintain or restore the stocks of key species at levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield in accordance with the objectives set out in paragraph 1.

19. The SAC shall assess the biological, economic and social implications of implementing several management scenarios with the objective of restoring and maintaining the species' population above levels which can produce the MSY.

20. Based on the SAC advice, the GFCM may review the content of the multiannual management plan.

21. Where SAC advice indicates that the general or specific objectives of the multi-annual plan are not being met, the GFCM shall decide on additional and/or alternative management measures to contribute to achieving those objectives.

22. Where, for any reason (*e.g.* lack of appropriate data), the SAC is not in a position of providing an accurate advice on the stock status of the key species of annex I and on their exploitation levels, the GFCM shall decide on the most appropriate management measures to ensure sustainability of the fisheries. These measures shall be based on SAC advice in accordance with the precautionary approach and taking into consideration environmental and socio-economic elements' in a way that guarantees the sustainability of the fisheries.

23. In 2020, the SAC shall evaluate the effectiveness of the measures already applied at national level and advise on whether these measures are adequate and if they could be applicable to the adjacent GSAs.

24. For the purpose of providing advice for the development of the multi-annual management plan, the CPCs and the SAC will facilitate the collation of existing relevant data and the collection of additional relevant data (including research survey data) and organise adequate workshops. For this purpose, the SAC shall promote scientific cooperation and a harmonised approach amongst all Ionian Sea riparian countries.

PART IV **Fleet Management measures**

25. Vessels authorised to fish the key species of annex I in the Ionian Sea shall be listed by the CPC whose flag they are flying. Vessels not listed by the CPC whose flag they are flying shall not catch, retain on board, tranship, land, store or sell the key species.

26. CPCs shall communicate to GFCM Secretariat not later than 31 January of each year, the list of the vessels flying their flag and actively fishing for the key species listed in Annex I for the current year or forthcoming years. This list shall include, for each vessel, the information referred to in annex I of Recommendation [GFCM/39/2015/2].

27. The vessels actively fishing for the key species listed in Annex I shall comply with the obligations established in Resolution GFCM/37/2013/2 and provide a detailed report of their fishing activities to national authorities, including as minimum requirements: the operating days, the operating area and the total catch of key species. This information shall be transmitted to the GFCM Secretariat at least yearly.

28. CPCs may designate additional spatial/temporal restrictions, with respect to those already established, in which fishing activities may be banned or restricted in order to protect aggregation areas of juveniles of the key species. Where applicable, CPCs shall notify to the GFCM Secretariat, by 1 January 2019 the list of these areas and the restrictions applied.

PART V **Management of fishing effort**

29. CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat for first time, no later than 1 June 2019, the

list of all their vessels actively fishing the key species listed in Annex I and their historic level of fishing effort.

30. Such list shall contain, for each vessel, the information referred to in annex I of Recommendation [GFCM/39/2015/2].

31. Any fishing vessel not included in the list established under point 26 above shall not be allowed to fish for, retain on board or land any quantity of the key species greater than 3 percent of the total live weight catch retained on board, if the vessel is engaged on a fishing trip in any of the GSAs 19, 20 or 21.

32. CPCs shall promptly notify the GFCM Secretariat of any addition to, any deletion from and/or any modification of the fishing fleets for key species, as identified under paragraph 27, at any time such changes may occur.

33. The GFCM Secretariat shall maintain and update the list of fishing vessels authorised to fish for the key species and publish it on the GFCM website in a manner consistent with GFCM data confidentiality policy and procedures.

34. Each CPC shall ensure to set up adequate mechanisms for the recording of each fishing vessel in a national fleet register, for the recording of vessel's catches and fishing effort via both the logbook and, remote sensing as well as for the monitoring of fishing vessels activities and landings via catch and effort sampling surveys according to the rules stipulated by each CPC.

35. The above provisions are without prejudice to Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 concerning minimum standards for the establishment of a vessel monitoring system in the GFCM area of application.

PART VI

Specific measures to address IUU fishing activities

36. CPCs shall establish a mechanism to ensure that vessels actively fishing in the Ionian Sea declare all catches and by-catches of the key species listed in Annex I. The obligation to declare catches will apply irrespective of the volume of the catch.

37. CPCs shall, no later than 31 December 2020, communicate to the Secretariat of the GFCM a map of the fishing grounds exploited by their vessels authorised to catch the key species listed in Annex I. Such map shall be prepared using the VMS data transmitted to the CPCs by their authorised vessels.

38. Each CPC shall designate landing points in which landings by vessels actively fishing for the key species in the Ionian Sea shall take place.

39. For each designated port, the CPC shall specify permitted landing and transshipping times and places.

40. CPCs shall carry out inspections shall take place on the basis of a risk analysis.

41. It shall be prohibited to land or tranship from fishing vessels any quantity of key species fished in the Ionian Sea at any place other than ports designated by CPCs in accordance with paragraph 38 above.

42. CPCs shall transmit to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 30 November each year, any changes to the list of the designated landing points in which landings of key species in Ionian Sea may take place.

43. CPCs shall engage to cooperate in the fight against IUU activities, in particular through sharing information and gathering intelligence to fight against illegal activities.

44. Part VI is without prejudice to Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application.

PART VII

Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) programme

45. All vessels above 10 metres length overall actively fishing the key species listed in Annex I shall be equipped with vessel monitoring system (VMS) or any other system of geo-positioning allowing control authorities to track their activities.

46. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1 concerning the establishment of a GFCM Logbook, all key species catches shall be indicated in the logbook irrespectively of the live weight of the catch.

47. Upon request of CPCs with the assistance of the GFCM secretariat, the GFCM shall establish in 2019 a pilot project with a view to establishing an observation and inspection programme in order to ensure compliance with the conservation and management measures contained in this Recommendation.

48. Such observation and inspection programme shall be based on the results of the pilot project and adopted before the end of 2020. It shall comprise, *inter alia*, the following elements:

a) High seas inspection;

b) Procedures for an effective investigation of an alleged violation of the conservation and management measures contained in this recommendation, and for reporting to the GFCM on the actions taken, including procedures for exchanging information;

c) Provisions for appropriate action to be taken when inspections reveal serious violations as well as the expedient and transparent follow-up of such actions in order to uphold the flag State's responsibility within the intended programme;

d) Port inspections;

e) Monitoring of landings and catches, including statistical follow-up for management purposes;

f) Specific monitoring programmes, including boarding and inspection;

g) Observer programmes

49. A working group shall be established to develop integrated MCS measures, in accordance with this recommendation. The tasks of this working group are defined in annex II of this Recommendation.

List of key species to be considered in the current recommendation

Name	Scientific name	GSA		
		19	20	21
Giant red shrimp	<i>Aristaeomorpha foliacea</i>	X	X	X
Blue and red shrimp	<i>Aristeus antennatus</i>	X	X	X

Terms of reference for the Working Group on integrated MCS measures for fisheries targeting key species in the Ionian Sea

The Working Group referred to in paragraph 49, shall:

- 1) be supported by the GFCM Secretariat;
- 2) establish a time schedule for the development of its work, and will hold at least one meeting during 2019, before the next meeting of the GFCM Compliance Committee (CoC);
- 3) invite observers attending GFCM meetings, the FAO, and other regional fisheries organizations to participate in its meetings; and
- 4) report its conclusions and opinions to the CoC.

The mandate of the Working Group will cover the elements as described in part VII of this recommendation.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/5 on a multiannual management plan for bottom trawl fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16), repealing Recommendations GFCM/39/2015/2 and GFCM/40/2016/4

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve the marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a sub-regional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks above levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield;

CONSIDERING that all measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

CONSIDERING that the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that ‘States should apply the precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures’;

RECALLING the mid-term strategy (2017-2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries;

NOTING that the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) has recurrently considered that the stocks of European hake and deep-water rose shrimp are in overexploitation in the geographical subareas (GSAs) 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16;

CONSIDERING that the state of stocks as assessed by the SAC requires the development and adoption of management measures aimed at ensuring the conservation of demersal stocks in geographical subareas (GSAs) 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 as soon as possible;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the SAC technical workshop on bio-economic assessment of management measures that took place in February 2016;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the meeting of the SAC Sub-Regional Committee for the Central Mediterranean that took place in February 2016;

CONSIDERING the socio-economic importance of fisheries exploiting demersal stocks and the need to ensure their sustainability;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the seventeenth session of the SAC (FAO headquarters, March

2015), and in particular those regarding the management of selected fisheries in the Strait of Sicily;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the eighteenth session of the SAC, and in particular those regarding the management of selected fisheries in the Strait of Sicily;

NOTING that the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) concluded, at its eighteenth session in 2016, that the stocks of European hake are heavily overexploited and, in some cases, well below safe biological limits;

NOTING that many fisheries exploiting European hake in the Mediterranean exert a pressure over juveniles;

CONSIDERING the Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/2 on the minimum mesh size in the codend of demersal trawl nets;

CONSIDERING the Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 concerning minimum standards for the establishment of a vessel monitoring system (VMS) in the GFCM area of application;

CONSIDERING the Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2 on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan;

CONSIDERING the Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/4 establishing a multiannual management plan for the fisheries exploiting European hake and deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily;

CONSIDERING the Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/5 establishing a minimum conservation reference size for European hake in the Mediterranean Sea;

CONSIDERING the Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/8 on an international joint inspection and surveillance scheme outside the waters under national jurisdiction in the Strait of Sicily;

CONSIDERING the socio-economic importance of fisheries exploiting demersal stocks and the need to ensure their sustainability;

NOTING Resolution GFCM/41/2017/5 on a network of essential fish habitats in the GFCM area of application;

ADOPTS, in conformity with the provisions of Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, that:

PART I

Subject matter, scope and definitions

Subject matter and scope

1. The present recommendation establishes a multiannual management plan (hereinafter ‘the plan’) for bottom trawl fisheries exploiting demersal stocks, including European hake and deep-water rose shrimp in the marine waters of GSAs 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 (hereafter ‘the Strait of Sicily’), as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2.

2. This recommendation shall apply to bottom trawlers above 10 meters length overall.

Definitions

3. For the purpose of this recommendation:

a) ‘European hake’ means fish belonging to the species *Merluccius merluccius*;

b) ‘Deep-water rose shrimp’ means crustaceans belonging to the species *Parapenaeus longirostris*;

c) ‘Designated landing ports’ means ports, or places close to the shore, designated in accordance with Recommendation GFCM/2008/32/1 on Port State measures, including offshore terminals and other installations for landing, transshipping, packaging, processing, refueling or resupplying of fishing vessels, where landings, transshipments, packaging and/or processing operations of fishery products are

permitted; and

d) 'fishing authorization' means a fishing authorization entitling a vessel to engage in fishing activities for demersal stocks, including European hake and deep-water rose shrimp during a specified period in the given area.

PART II

Specific objectives and targets

Specific objectives

4. The plan shall aim at contributing to the objectives mentioned in Article 2 and the principles listed in Article 5 of the GFCM Agreement.

5. The plan shall, in particular:

a) Apply the precautionary approach to fisheries management;

b) Ensure that exploitation levels of European hake and deep-water rose shrimp are at the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) by 2020 at the latest;

c) Protect nursery areas and essential fish habitats important for the stocks of European hake and deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily;

d) Gradually eliminate discards, by avoiding and reducing, as far as possible, unwanted catches, and by gradually ensuring that all catches are landed;

e) Provide for measures to adjust the fishing capacity of the fleets to levels of fishing mortalities consistent with the MSY, with a view to having economically viable fleets and without overexploiting marine biological resources.

Targets

6. The target fishing mortality ranges for the stocks of European hake and deep-water rose shrimp, as provided in Annex 1 to this recommendation, shall be reached by 2020 and maintained onwards.

PART III

Technical measures

Minimum conservation reference size

7. Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/5 establishing a minimum conservation reference size for European hake in the Mediterranean Sea shall apply.

8. The minimum conservation reference size for deep-water rose shrimp shall be fixed at 20 mm carapace length (CL).

9. Specimens of European hake and of deep-water rose shrimp smaller than the minimum conservation reference size, defined in paragraph 7 shall not be caught, retained on board, transhipped, transferred, landed, stored, sold, displayed or offered for sale.

10. The contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) shall communicate annually to the GFCM Secretariat the specific modalities they apply under the provisions stipulated in paragraph 7, 8 and 9, including landing obligation, aiming at avoiding discards which are in force in some CPCs as well as landing inspection modalities when a flexibility scheme is foreseen at the national level.

11. In order to define additional appropriate spatio-temporal restrictions in view of the sustainable management of the stocks referred to in paragraph 1, the CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 30 June 2019 and thereafter annually, the spatial restrictions in the waters under their jurisdiction that they apply with a view to protecting spawning and nursery areas for demersal stocks, including European hake and deep-water rose shrimp.

Fisheries restricted areas

12. Fisheries restricted areas (FRAs) shall be established for the conservation and management of the demersal stocks, including European hake and deep-water rose shrimp, in the three areas of the Strait of Sicily as defined in Annex 2.

13. Notwithstanding paragraph 2, any fishing activity with bottom trawlers irrespective of their overall length shall not be allowed in the FRAs defined in paragraph 12.

14. In order to avoid accidental access to the FRAs established in paragraph 12, buffer areas extending one nautical mile beyond the FRAs shall be established as defined in Annex 2.

15. Any fishing activity with bottom trawlers in the buffer areas established in paragraph 14 shall ensure that their vessel monitoring system (VMS) is fully functional before entering the buffer zone. Those vessels not equipped with VMS transponder and aiming to fish in the buffer areas shall be equipped with any other system of geo-location allowing control authorities to track their activities.

16. The SAC shall identify additional nursery areas of European hake in the entire Strait of Sicily.

17. The SAC shall also identify areas where discards of European hake and/or deep-sea rose shrimp below the minimum conservation reference size or juveniles are high.

Temporal closure

18. Notwithstanding paragraph 2, any fishing activity with bottom trawlers irrespective of their overall length shall not be allowed between the coast and the 200 metres depth isobath of GSA 14 (Gulf of Gabès). This closure shall apply every year from 1 July until 31 September.

PART IV

Fleet and effort management measures

19. Bottom trawlers exploiting demersal stocks including European hake and deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily shall only be allowed to carry out specific fishing activities if these are indicated in a valid fishing authorization issued by the competent authorities and specifying the technical conditions under which such activities shall be carried out (see Annex 3). Such vessels shall be equipped with a vessel monitoring system (VMS), in accordance with Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 concerning minimum standards for the establishment of a vessel monitoring system in the GFCM area of application.

20. The CPCs shall maintain and keep up-to-date a register of the above-mentioned fishing authorizations. Unless specifically provided for within the GFCM data collection programme, the CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat:

- The list of operating vessels for which such authorization has been delivered for the following year(s), not later than 30 November of each year;

- A report on fishing activities carried out by the vessels referred to in paragraph 19, in an aggregated format, including the following minimum information: number of exploitation days, exploitation area and catches and discards of European hake and of deep-water rose shrimp, no later than 31 August of each year, starting from August 2019.

21. In order to facilitate the exchange of information regarding inspections to be done, the Secretariat shall provide the CPCs with access credentials to a secure website listing in real time the fishing vessels authorized to carry out fishing activities in a given fishery.

22. The CPCs that have introduced, since 2010, fishing capacity reduction measures or fishing effort

restrictions, including through the establishment of spatial and/or temporal closures, shall be encouraged to ensure that such measures, or their effects, are maintained. The SAC shall be invited to formulate advice aiming at improving the efficiency of such measures.

23. The CPCs shall take the necessary measures to reduce the fishing mortality of European hake and of deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily and align them with the objectives and the timeline set out in paragraph 6. Measures should be considered in terms of number of fishing days, fishing vessels and catch limits.

PART V

National management plans

24. In order to ensure adequate conservation of demersal stocks, the (CPCs) shall adopt fisheries management measures or national management plans in the Strait of Sicily.

25. The CPCs shall notify the GFCM Secretariat, from 31 January 2019, of the management measures or management plans adopted at the national level. Where appropriate, should these measures be modified, the CPCs shall communicate such modifications by 31 January of the following year.

PART VI

Specific measures to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities

26. The CPCs shall establish a mechanism to ensure that the vessels authorized to fish for European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily shall record all their catches of European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimp.

27. Each CPC shall designate landing ports in which landings of European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimp from the Strait of Sicily may take place.

28. The CPCs shall specify, for each designated landing port, the permitted landing and transshipping times and places. The CPCs shall also ensure inspection coverage during all landing and transshipping times and at all landing and transshipping places.

29. It shall be prohibited to land or transship from fishing vessels any quantity of European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimp fished in the Strait of Sicily at any place other than landing ports designated in accordance with paragraph 26.

30. The CPCs shall transmit to the GFCM Secretariat no later than 30 November 2018 a list of the designated landing ports in which landings of European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimp from the Strait of Sicily may take place. Any subsequent change that may occur to this list shall be promptly notified to the GFCM Secretariat.

31. The CPCs shall engage to cooperate on the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, in particular through sharing information and gathering intelligence to fight against IUU fishing activities and organized crime.

PART VII

Programmes for control, monitoring and surveillance

32. The CPCs, through the GFCM, shall establish or maintain an observation and inspection programme to ensure compliance with the conservation and management measures contained in this Recommendation. The programme may *inter alia* comprise the following elements:

a) High seas inspection;

b) Procedures for an effective investigation of an alleged violation of the conservation and management measures contained in this recommendation, and for reporting to the GFCM on the actions taken, including procedures for exchanging information;

c) Provisions for appropriate action to be taken when inspections reveal serious violations as well as the expedient and transparent follow-up of such actions in order to uphold the flag State's responsibility within the intended programme;

- d) Port inspections;
- e) Monitoring of landings and catches, including statistical follow-up for management purposes;
- f) Specific monitoring programmes, including boarding and inspection;
- g) Observer programmes.

33. Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/8 on an international joint inspection and surveillance scheme outside the waters under national jurisdiction in the Strait of Sicily shall apply for a period of three years from the date of the adoption of this recommendation.

PART VIII

Scientific monitoring, adaptation and revision of the plan

34. The CPCs shall ensure adequate annual scientific monitoring of European hake and of deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily.
35. The SAC shall provide advice on the status of European hake and of deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily. Such advice shall include reference points in terms of fishing mortality at levels which can produce the MSY at the latest by 2020 and safeguard points.
36. The SAC shall assess the biological, economic and social implications of implementing several management scenarios with the objective of restoring and maintaining the populations of harvested species above levels which can produce the MSY.
37. The SAC shall advise on the most appropriate minimum and/or maximum landing sizes for elasmobranchs species affected by the fisheries exploiting European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily.
38. The SAC shall advise on the most appropriate technical measures to improve the selectivity of bottom trawlers targeting European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimps stocks.
39. The SAC shall identify where appropriate nursery areas beyond 200 m depths in GSA 14 (Gulf of Gabès).
40. Whenever the GFCM, on the basis of advice from the SAC, finds that the target fishing mortality rates specified in paragraph 6 are no longer appropriate to achieve the objectives detailed in paragraph 5, it shall revise those parameters accordingly.
41. Where the scientific advice indicates that the general or specific objectives of the plan are not being met, the GFCM shall decide on additional and/or alternative management measures to ensure that those objectives are achieved.
42. Where for whatever reason (e.g. lack of appropriate data) the SAC is not in a position of providing an accurate advice on the state of the European hake and of deep-water rose shrimp and on their exploitation levels, the GFCM shall decide on the most appropriate management measures to ensure the sustainability of the fishery. These measures shall be based on SAC advice taking into consideration socio-economic elements.
43. For the purpose of providing advice for the development of the plan, the SAC shall organize adequate workshops. To this purpose, the SAC shall promote scientific cooperation and a harmonized approach among all countries around the Strait of Sicily.

PART IX

Final provisions

44. The current plan remains in force for three years from the date of its adoption.
45. This recommendation repeals and replaces Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2 and Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/4.

**Target fishing mortality for European hake and deep-water rose shrimp
in the Strait of Sicily**

Stock	Target fishing mortality range
European hake in the Strait of Sicily	0.12 - 0.18
Deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily	0.84 - 0.93

Geographical coordinates of the fisheries restricted areas (FRAs)

FRA 1: East of Adventure Bank

Fisheries restricted area	
Latitude	Longitude
37° 23,850' N	12° 30,072' E
37° 23,884' N	12° 48,282' E
37° 11,567' N	12° 48,305' E
37° 11,532' N	12° 30,095' E

Buffer area	
Latitude	Longitude
37° 13,041' N	13° 16,672' E
37° 13,049' N	13° 37,422' E
36° 58,723' N	13° 37,424' E
36° 58,715' N	13° 16,682' E

FRA 2: West of Gela Basin

Fisheries restricted area	
Latitude	Longitude
37° 12,040' N	13° 17,925' E
37° 12,047' N	13° 36,170' E
36° 59,725' N	13° 36,175' E
36° 59,717' N	13° 17,930' E

Buffer area	
Latitude	Longitude
36° 13,624' N	15° 12,102' E
36° 13,624' N	15° 27,298' E
35° 58,342' N	15° 27,294' E
35° 58,342' N	15° 12,106' E

FRA 3: East of Malta Bank

Fisheries restricted area	
Latitude	Longitude
36° 12,621' N	15° 13,338' E
36° 12,621' N	15° 26,062' E
35° 59,344' N	15° 26,062' E
35° 59,344' N	15° 13,338' E

Buffer area	
Latitude	Longitude
37° 24,849' N	12° 28,814' E
37° 24,888' N	12° 49,536' E
37° 10,567' N	12° 49,559' E
37° 10,528' N	12° 28,845' E

Subject to more detailed provisions under the GFCM data collection programme, the list referred to in paragraph 21 shall contain, for each vessel, the following information:

- Vessel name
- Vessel register number (code assigned by the CPCs)
- GFCM registration number (country ISO 3-alpha code + 9 digits, e.g. xxx000000001)
- Port of registration (full name of the port)
- Previous name (if any)
- Previous flag (if any)
- Previous details of deletion from other registers (if any)
- International radio call sign (if any)
- VMS (indicate Y/N)
- Vessel type, length overall (LOA) and gross tonnage (GT) and/or gross registered tonnage (GRT) and engine power expressed in kW
- Name and address of owner(s) and/or charter and/or operator(s)
- Main target species
- Main gear used for European hake and deep-water rose shrimp and fleet segment allocation
- Time period authorized for fishing with bottom trawl or any other gear likely to fish European hake and/or deep-water rose shrimp (if any of such authorization)

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/6 on an international joint inspection and surveillance scheme outside the waters under national jurisdiction in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16), amending Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/8

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of marine living resources in the GFCM area of application;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that, in giving effect of the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a subregional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/4 establishing a multiannual management plan for the fisheries exploiting European hake and deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16);

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/8 on an international joint inspection and surveillance scheme outside the waters under national jurisdiction in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16);

NOTING that Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/XXX establishing a multiannual management plan for bottom trawl fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily (GSAs 12 to 16) repeals and replaces Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/4;

CONSIDERING that it is appropriate to align the duration of the international joint inspection and surveillance scheme outside the waters under national jurisdiction in the Strait of Sicily to the provisions of Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/XXX;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, the following recommendation:

MODIFICATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION GFCM/41/2017/8

1. Paragraph 26 shall be modified as follows:

“This recommendation shall be implemented for a period of at least three years”

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/7 on a regional research programme on blue crab in the Mediterranean

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve the marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a sub-regional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks at levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY);

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks of 4 August 1995 and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

CONSIDERING that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that States “should apply the precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, taking account of the best scientific evidence available. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take measures to conserve target species, associated or dependent species and non-target species and their environment”;

CONSIDERING that certain fisheries management measures need to be revised and adapted to the evolution of both the status of exploited stock and scientific knowledge and that an appropriate method to this end shall be established;

CONSIDERING the socioeconomic impact of blue crab fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea, which is considered as a non-indigenous species of commercial interest that constitutes a fishery resource providing profits for local communities;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5b, 8b, and 13 of the GFCM Agreement the following Recommendation:

PART I
Objectives, scope and definitions

Objectives of the research program and the transitional measures

1. This recommendation shall establish a regional research programme (hereafter referred to as "programme") for the sustainable exploitation of the blue crab in the Mediterranean, while ensuring socioeconomic sustainability.
2. This recommendation applies to all commercial fishing activities exploiting blue crab in the Mediterranean
3. The regional research programme on blue crab established by this recommendation shall support the SAC.
4. Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) who are actively fishing in the Mediterranean, accept to implement the regional research programme for blue crab fisheries and in accordance with the objectives of this recommendation.

Geographical scope

5. The research programme established by this recommendation shall apply in the Mediterranean.

Definitions

6. For the purpose of this recommendation:

"Blue crab" means the species *Portunus segnis* and *Callinectes sapidus*

PART II
Operational and specific objectives

7. The operational objectives of this recommendation shall be to improve scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge of the fisheries exploiting blue crab, by setting a regional research programme on blue crab.
8. The specific objectives of this recommendation shall be to collect data on fishing activities to improve research and scientific knowledge for the sustainable exploitation of the stock, aiming at maintaining the stock at MSY levels and the socioeconomic sustainability of blue crab fisheries.
9. The SAC, at its annual meeting in 2021, shall report to the GFCM annual session in 2021, including if deemed necessary, proposals for the adaptation of the measures set by this recommendation and for complementary management and control measures to be included.
10. Based on the recommendations and advice of the paragraph 9, during its 45th session, the GFCM may adapt these measures in accordance with the objectives set out in Parts I and II of this recommendation.

PART III
Regional research programme and scientific monitoring

11. CPCs with fishing activities targeting blue crab shall ensure that a mechanism for adequate scientific monitoring of blue crab catches in the Mediterranean is duly in place, with a view to facilitating the implementation of the regional research programme and to allowing the SAC to provide descriptive information and advice on at least the following:

(a) deployed fishing effort (e.g. number of fishing days/week) and the overall catch level at national or supranational levels, indicating the fishing gears used,

(b) biological and socio-economic effects of alternative management scenarios, including input/output and/or technical measures, such as fishing gears/environmental impacts, as proposed by the CPCs.

12. The GFCM Secretariat shall provide terms of reference, including costs, services and other requirements to support, through a call for tender, the implementation of a research programme on blue crab in the Mediterranean, as described in Annex I of this recommendation. The regional research programme shall be launched in 2019.

PART IV
Final provisions

13. These measures shall be assessed by the SAC and, if necessary, reviewed by the GFCM at its 45th session in 2021.

14. In light of the results of the regional research programme referred to in Part III of this recommendation, the GFCM may propose and adopt new appropriate management and control measures, including the monitoring of the fishing activities and the catches.

Key elements of the regional research programme on blue crab

Introduction

There is high need of scientific and research projects aimed to fill gaps of knowledge on blue crab as a fishery resource.

Main features of the regional research programme on blue crab

- Clear objectives defined in advance (e.g. biomass in ton, abundance in no/sqkm², spatiotemporal distribution patterns)
- Priority given to the collection of data useful for the provision of the scientific advice in support of management (length, age, life-cycle)
- Combination of fishery dependent and fisheries independent sources of information to ensure a regular monitoring
- All CPCs should be involved;
- The regional research programme should also provide guidelines and facilitate harmonization, standardization of protocols, coordination and comparison of results obtained by past, ongoing and future national, regional and international research programmes addressing blue crab;

Work packages

Work packages are designed to address the main issues required as before-mentioned, as well as to address the need to evaluate the social and economic aspects of this fishery, in the context of the sustainable management and exploitation of the stock.

Work Package 1 – Biology and Ecology

Work Package 2 – Fishery independent data collection – Surveys at sea

Work Package 3 – Fishery dependent data collection

Work Package 4 – Stock assessment

Work Package 5 – Socioeconomic elements

Work Package 6 – Management proposals

Main objectives of each work package

WP 1 - Biology and Ecology of blue crab including demography: Studies on size/ density, abundance,

biomass, recruitment, growth, reproduction, physiology, environmental parameters, habitat, feeding and by-catches surveys. Ecology: Genetics, interactions with other species, impacts of fishing gears to marine environment.

WP 2 - Fishery independent data collection through multiannual demersal beam trawl/dredges surveys at sea, e.g. biomass and abundance indices, size/age distribution, by-catches.

WP 3 - Fishery dependent data collection through port sampling, e.g. landings, length/distribution, fishing techniques used and vessels engaged to the fishing activity, value, and through observers on board, e.g. by-catches, days at sea.

WP 4 - Stock assessment: Investigation on methodologies for assessing the status of blue crab including by compiling historical data.

WP 5 - Socioeconomic elements: Socioeconomic survey on the sector, trade, markets and development of economic indicators, external aspects affecting the fishery, economic sustainability of related fishing gears.

WP 6 - Management proposals: identification of possible additional measures through MSE, for the sustainability of the blue crab fisheries.

Implementation of the regional research programme

The GFCM shall:

- Assess progress in the different work packages,
- Define standardized methods (e.g. in ageing) as well as research protocols, and
- Organize capacity building activities.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/8 on further emergency measures in 2019-2021 for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (geographical subareas 17 and 18)

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve the marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a subregional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks above levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY);

CONSIDERING that all measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

CONSIDERING that the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that “States should apply the precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures”;

NOTING that the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) has considered that the stocks of anchovy and sardine are distributed in GFCM geographical subarea (GSA) 17 and GSA 18 and carried out the first joint assessments at its eighteenth session;

NOTING that the revision of input data and benchmark assessment for sardine and anchovy in GSA 17 and GSA 18 were undertaken during 2015-2016 and final stock assessment models based on the revised data were provided by the GFCM Working Group on Stock Assessment of Small Pelagic Species (WGSASP) in November 2017;

CONSIDERING that at its twentieth session, (June 2018, Morocco) the SAC concluded that both anchovy and sardine stocks in GSA 17 and GSA 18 are overexploited and in overexploitation with respectively an F/F_{msy} of 2.23 and 2.77 and that it advised once again to decrease fishing mortality;

CONSIDERING that fishing mortality is an overall measurement system, which can be adjusted by applying reductions in terms of fishing capacity and/or fishing effort;

CONSIDERING the expiration of the emergency measures for 2017 and 2018 (REC.CM-GFCM/40/2016/3), the Commission shall update the current management plan (GFCM/37/2013/1) with the latest scientific advice to ensure implementation in 2022 at the latest. Due to the particularly bad state of anchovy stock, it is necessary to adopt new emergency measure to reduce the fishing mortality on the small pelagic stocks in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

CONSIDERING that under article 18 of GFCM/37/2013/1, if SAC had found anchovy and sardines to be still overexploited, the Commission may have to adopt more stringent measures aiming at achieving the objectives set out in paragraph 1.

NOTING that the acoustic survey data for both small pelagic species, sardine and anchovy, indicates a declining trend in total biomass;

NOTING that the latest SAC stock assessment of anchovy also indicates a further declining trend in spawning stock biomass (SSB) since 2005 and decline in SSB of sardine compared to last year;

NOTING that since temporal restrictions are considered to have a beneficial effect on fisheries, a closed period during the spawning season of anchovy and sardine in the Adriatic Sea shall be applied;

CONSIDERING that, due to stock dynamics, it may take several years to observe the effects of the management measures adopted and applied to date on the stock status of small pelagic species in the Adriatic Sea but that this delay should not be taken as a justification to delay action to improve the status of these stocks;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM may consider adopting additional measures including catch limitations;

CONSIDERING the socio-economic importance of fisheries exploiting sardine and anchovy in the Adriatic Sea and the need to ensure their sustainability;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/27/2002/1 on the management of selected demersal and small pelagic species and, notably, paragraph 2 therein;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/30/2006/1 on the management of certain fisheries exploiting demersal and small pelagic and, notably, paragraph 2 and 3 therein;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1 on a multiannual management plan for fisheries on small pelagic stocks in GSA 17 (northern Adriatic Sea) and on transitional conservation measures for fisheries on small pelagic stocks in GSA 18 (southern Adriatic Sea);

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/38/2014/1 amending Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1 and on precautionary and emergency measures for 2015 on small pelagic stocks in GSA 17;

NOTING that, under Recommendation GFCM/38/2014/1, a reduction of fishing effort as well as spatio-temporal closures are being applied in 2015 for vessels fishing small pelagic stocks in GSA 17;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/1 establishing further precautionary and emergency measures in 2016 for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GSA 17 and GSA 18);

NOTING that, under Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/1, a reduction of fishing effort was applied for fishing vessels targeting anchovy in GSA 17 for 2016 and spatio-temporal closures are being applied in 2016 for vessels fishing small pelagic stocks in GSA 17 and GSA 18;

ADOPTS, in conformity with the provisions of Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, that:

General objective, geographical scope and definitions

1. The general objective of the present recommendation is to ensure that exploitation levels of small pelagic in the Adriatic Sea are reduced in order to achieve the maximum sustainable yield by 2020 and ensure stability of fishing fleets targeting small pelagics in the socio-economic terms.
2. The present recommendation shall apply in the GSA 17 and GSA 18 (Adriatic Sea) until 2021.
3. For the purpose of this recommendation,
 - a) “anchovy” means fish pertaining to the *Engraulis encrasicolus* species;
 - b) “sardine” means fish pertaining to the *Sardina pilchardus* species;
 - c) “small pelagics” means stocks of anchovy and sardine;
 - d) “pelagic trawler” means fishing vessel operating single or in pair with pelagic trawl net; and
 - e) “purse seiner” means fishing vessel operating with purse seine net for small pelagic species

PART II

Emergency management measures

4.1 In 2019, 2020 and 2021, the GFCM Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) shall not exceed the level of catches for small pelagics exerted in 2014 as reported in accordance with Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/3 on the implementation of the GFCM Task 1.

4.2 The provision under paragraph 4.1 shall not apply to the CPCs with catches below 2,500 tonnes in 2014 and these CPCs shall not exceed catches of 2,500 tonnes in any of the three years covered by this Recommendation.

4.3 In addition, in 2019, 2020 and 2021, the CPCs with declared catches over 2,500 tonnes in 2014 shall implement a progressive 5% reduction in each year starting from the level of catches for small pelagics exerted in 2014 as reported with Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/3 on the implementation of the GFCM Task 1.5. If this catch limit set in article 4 is exceeded in any given year, the GFCM shall recommend appropriate management measures compensating the over catch.

Fishing effort

6. Notwithstanding the fishing effort established under paragraph 27 of Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1 and Recommendation GFCM/38/2014/1, the CPCs shall ensure that their fishing vessels targeting small pelagics shall not exceed 180 fishing days per year, with maximum of 144 fishing days targeting sardine and with maximum of 144 fishing days targeting anchovy.

Closures

7. In 2019, 2020 and 2021, the CPCs shall apply specific temporal closures at the fleet level (even if not simultaneously for purse seiners and pelagic trawlers) in view of protecting stocks during spawning periods. Such closures shall cover the entire distribution of small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea and will affect all fleets targeting small pelagics, for periods of no less than 30 continuous days per fleet segment. Vessels belonging to fleet under closure shall be prohibited to change gear for targeting small pelagics (purse seine to/from pelagic trawl) during the closure period. These closures shall take place during the following period:

- for sardine from 1 October to 31 March, and
- for anchovy from 1 April to 30 September

8. By way of derogation from paragraph 7, these temporal closures may be implemented for periods of no less than 15 continuous days for national fleets of less than [15] purse seiners and/or pelagic trawlers actively fishing for small pelagic stocks.

9. The CPCs shall apply spatial closures for vessels over 12 m length overall for no less than 7 months in 2019, 8 months in 2020 and 9 months in 2021. Such closures shall cover 30 percent of the territorial or inner waters identified as area important for the protection of early age classes of fish.

10. In order to protect small pelagics, in 2019, 2020 and 2021 fishing activity with purse seines and pelagic trawlers targeting anchovy or sardine shall be prohibited in the area outlined in the map in ANNEX I.

11. The CPCs shall notify to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 31 December 2018, the set of closure dates and areas of application listed under point 7, 8 and 9.

Fleet capacity and fleet register

12. The CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 30 November 2018, the list of all pelagic trawlers (single or pair trawlers) and purse seiners fishing actively for small pelagic stocks in 2014.

13. The CPCs shall ensure that the overall fleet capacity of trawlers and purse seiners actively fishing for small pelagic stocks in terms of gross tonnage (GT) and/or gross registered tonnage (GRT), engine power (kW) and number of vessels, as recorded both in national and GFCM registers, does not exceed the fleet capacity for small pelagics in 2014.

14. The provision under paragraph 13 shall not apply to the national fleets of less than ten purse seiners and/or pelagic trawlers actively fishing for small pelagic stocks. In such case capacity of active fleet may increase for not more than 50 percent in number of vessels and in terms of gross tonnage (GT) and/or gross registered tonnage (GRT) and engine power (kW).

PART III Scientific monitoring

15. The SAC shall suggest alternative solutions to ensure the availability of hydroacoustic survey results of the previous year not later than 31 January of a given year including implementation of additional winter survey.

16. SAC shall evaluate each year the effectiveness of the emergency measures (this recommendation) towards achieving the objectives set out in paragraph 1.

17. The SAC on its annual session of 2020, shall mandate the WKMSE working-group to test, in a management strategy evaluation (MSE), alternative management approaches to be implemented starting from 2022, according to the TORs outlined in Annex 2.

18. On the basis of the outcomes of the work under point 17 and SAC advice, in 2021 GFCM shall revise the Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1 and implement a management plan in 2022 at the latest.

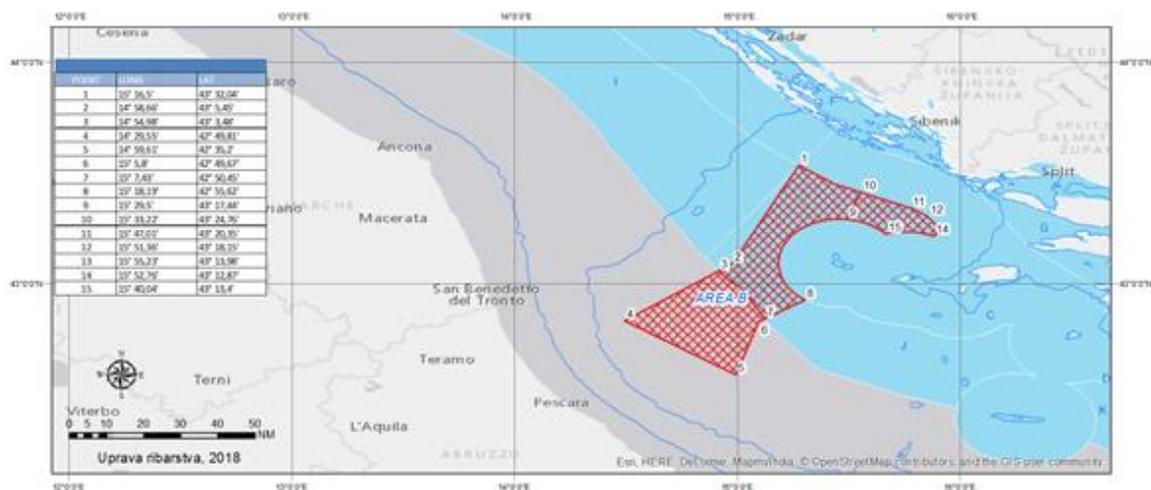
PART IV Program for control, monitoring and surveillance

19. In order to facilitate monitoring of catches, all catches shall be landed, with the exception of those catches which may be discarded in accordance with current national legislation.

20. Upon request of CPCs, with the assistance of the GFCM secretariat, a pilot project shall be established in 2019 with a view to establishing a voluntary observation and inspection program, in order to ensure compliance with the conservation and management measures in this recommendation.

21. The voluntary observation and inspection program, to be implemented in 2019, 2020 and 2021, will comprise, inter alia, the following elements:

- a) Inspection at sea
- b) Procedures for an effective investigation of an alleged violation of the conservation and management measures contained in this recommendation, and for reporting to the GFCM on the actions taken, including procedures for exchanging information;
- c) Provisions for appropriate action to be taken when inspections reveal serious violations as well as the expedient and transparent follow-up of such actions in order to uphold the flag State's responsibility within the intended program;
- d) Port inspections;
- e) Monitoring of landings and catches, including statistical follow-up for management purposes;
- f) Specific monitoring programmes, including boarding and inspection.



Pomo/Jabuka Pit		
Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	43°32,044' N	15°16,501' E
2	43°05,452' N	14°58,658' E
3	43°03,477' N	14°54,982' E
4	42°49,811' N	14°29,550' E
5	42°35,205' N	14°59,611' E
6	42°49,668' N	15°05,802' E
7	42°50,450' N	15°07,431' E
8	42°55,618' N	15°18,194' E
9	43°17,436' N	15°29,496' E
10	43°24,758' N	15°33,215' E
11	43°20,345' N	15°47,012' E
12	43°18,150' N	15°51,362' E
13	43°13,984' N	15°55,232' E
14	43°12,873' N	15°52,761' E
15	43°13,494' N	15°40,040' E

TORs for Working Group on Adriatic Management Strategies of small pelagics

The working group is requested to test alternative management approaches (HCR) for Adriatic anchovy and sardine, starting in 2022, using different effort and/or catch based management strategies and reference points operating on the basis of fixed values of fishing mortality and biomass..

TOR 1)

Management Decision

- a. Test fixed Fmsy HCR coupled with effort and catch based management that will ensure a low probability of SSB to fall below Blim (5% probability), including the scenarios agreed in WKMSE 2017 in Table 2.
- b. Test a biomass escapement HCR that will ensure a low probability of SSB to fall below Blim (5% probability), coupled with effort and catch based management. For this HCR, define:
 1. an optimal level of the biomass escapement ($B_{\text{escapement}}$)
 2. the need of a fishing mortality cap (F_{cap})
- c. WKMSE can propose and test other appropriate management scenarios for small pelagics fishery in Adriatic based on ecosystem approach.

TOR 2)

Economic Performance

Evaluate the impact of the different HCRs on the socio-economic aspect of the concerned fleets and related industries (processing and tuna farming).

TOR 3)

Performance Statistics

Evaluate performance of alternate scenarios on 5-10-20 year time scale using standard MSE diagnostic tools, focusing in particular on the following in relation to Harvest Rate:

- Probability of SSB falling below B_{lim} .
- Risk vs catch level
- Catch variability
- Average catch
- Level of SSB
- Probability of fisheries closure

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/9 on the establishment of a minimum conservation reference size for blackspot seabream in the Mediterranean

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter "the GFCM"),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter "the Agreement") is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks above levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield;

RECALLING that the Malta Ministerial declaration "MedFish4Ever" requires that in the context of establishing an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework, all key fisheries should be managed with management plans;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereafter the "FAO");

CONSIDERING that the blackspot seabream has a peculiar biological life history (*protandric hermaphrodite* species) with relevant percent of individuals changing sex to females at around 33 cm total length while the size at first maturity (L50%) is around 30 cm for males and 36 cm for females. These biological characteristics are similar to stocks distributed in different geographical areas;

CONSIDERING the high socio-economic importance of fisheries, especially local fisheries, exploiting blackspot seabream and the need to ensure their sustainability;

CONSIDERING that the blackspot seabream is also targeted by recreational fisheries;

NOTING that the blackspot seabream is included in the list of priority species of GFCM for the Western Mediterranean;

NOTING that for blackspot seabream exists a high level of illegal, unreported and unregulated catches (IUU) all over the Mediterranean and that a more adequate monitoring of involved fishing fleets, including recreational fisheries, is needed;

NOTING that the SAC agrees on the needs, as highlighted by the SRC-WM, for the provision of advice for the potential establishment of management measures including, inter alia, an improved the bio-economic monitoring and effort standardization of the fisheries;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5b, 8 b and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, the following recommendation:

PART I
General objective, geographical scope and definitions

1. The general objective of the present recommendation is to protect juvenile "blackspot seabream" in the Mediterranean Sea.

2. For the purpose of this recommendation, “blackspot seabream” means fish pertaining to the species: *Pagellus bogaraveo*.

PART II
Minimum conservation reference size

3. The minimum conservation reference size for blackspot seabream in the whole area covered by this recommendation is fixed at XX¹ cm total length.

4. Specimens of blackspot seabream shall be measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail fin.

5. Specimens of blackspot seabream smaller than the minimum conservation reference size, defined in paragraph 3, in total length as reported above and measured to the lowest centimetre, shall not be caught, retained on board, transhipped, transferred, landed, stored, sold, displayed or offered for sale.

6. Notwithstanding paragraph 5, when due to unavoidable circumstances undersized specimens of blackspot seabream have been effectively caught, the master of the catching vessel shall record those catches (estimated weight) of undersized specimens.

7. The GFCM Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) shall establish an adequate mechanism for recording catches of undersized specimens of blackspot seabream

8. Without prejudice to provisions foreseen in paragraph 5 and when a system of avoiding discards and obligation to land all catches has been established by a CPC, except in justified cases where there is a derogation for landing obligations (especially in case of fisheries where high-survival rates are well documented), the master of the fishing vessel shall not be allowed to discard those catches and shall therefore land all the fish caught independently of the size of the fish. All quantities of undersize fish landed shall be recorded and shall not be displayed, offered for sale or used for direct human consumption.

¹ To be defined in line with the scientific advice of the SAC in 2019.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/10 on a regional research programme for rapa whelk fisheries in the Black Sea (geographical subarea 29)

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve the marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a subregional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks at levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY);

RECALLING that the 2016 Bucharest Declaration towards enhanced cooperation on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture, particularly the technical outputs of the experts Panel 1 of the Annex of the Declaration, call upon cooperation with the GFCM towards the promotion of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, which includes the collection of information on fisheries-related issues, such as relevant socio-economic data, discards, incidental catches of vulnerable species, invasive species and other aspects of marine ecosystems;

RECALLING that the 2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture calls upon Black Sea riparian countries to enhance multilateral cooperation and implement actions to improve the sustainability of resources, particularly with regard to data collection and scientific evaluation and implementation of an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework in the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks of 4 August 1995 and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

CONSIDERING that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that States “should apply the precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, taking account of the best scientific evidence available. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take measures to conserve target species, associated or dependent species and non-target species and their environment”;

CONSIDERING that the measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available and on the work of the BlackSea4Fish Project in supporting the advice delivered by the

Working Group on the Black Sea, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

NOTING the conclusions of the fifth meeting of the Subregional Group on Stock Assessment in the Black Sea of the Working Group on the Black Sea (Batumi, Georgia, 4-9 December 2017), with regard to Rapa whelk fisheries which is already reaching MSY levels, suggesting that care should be taken in expanding this fishery further;

CONSIDERING that fishing mortality should be kept below safe thresholds to ensure long-term high yields while limiting the risk of stocks collapse and guaranteeing stable and more viable fisheries;

CONSIDERING the socioeconomic importance of Rapa whelk fisheries in the Black Sea and the need to ensure their long-term economic sustainability;

CONSIDERING that certain fisheries management measures need to be revised and adapted to the evolution of both the status of exploited stock and scientific knowledge and that an appropriate method to this end shall be established;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5b, 8b, and 13 of the GFCM Agreement the following Recommendation:

PART I

Objectives, scope and definitions

Objectives of the research program

1. This recommendation shall establish a regional research programme (hereafter referred to as "programme") towards the sustainable exploitation of the Rapa whelk in the Black Sea, GFCM geographical subarea 29.
2. This recommendation applies to all commercial fishing activities exploiting Rapa whelk in the Black Sea, GFCM geographical subarea 29.
3. The regional research programme on Rapa whelk established by this recommendation shall support the GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea and it shall be scientifically assessed and coordinated by the GFCM BlackSea4Fish Project.
4. Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) whose vessels are actively fishing in GFCM geographical subarea 29 agree to implement the regional research programme, for Rapa whelk fisheries and in accordance with the objectives of this recommendation.

Geographical scope

5. The research programme and the transitional measures established by this recommendation shall apply in the GFCM geographical subarea 29.

Definitions

6. For the purpose of this recommendation:
 - a) "Black Sea" means the GFCM geographical subarea 29 as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2 on the establishment of geographical subareas in the GFCM area of application, amending Resolution GFCM/31/2007/2;

- b) "Rapa whelk" means gastropod pertaining to the species *Rapana venosa*;
- c) "Vessel actively fishing" for Rapa whelk means any vessel equipped with fishing gear to fish Rapa whelk or used to fish Rapa whelk by scuba diving method, and granted a valid fishing authorization for Rapa whelk;

PART II

Operational and specific objectives

7. The operational objective of this recommendation shall be to improve scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge of the fisheries exploiting Rapa whelk, by setting a regional research programme on Rapa whelk.

8. The specific objectives of this recommendation shall be to collect data on fishing activities to improve research and scientific knowledge for the sustainable exploitation of the stock, aiming at maintaining the stock at MSY levels and the socioeconomic viability of Rapa whelk fisheries.

9. The GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea, at its annual meeting in 2021, shall assess the outcome of the research programme established by this recommendation taking into consideration the national efforts made by CPCs to manage this fisheries. It shall report to the GFCM annual session in 2021, including if deemed necessary, proposals for the adaptation of the measures set by this recommendation and for complementary management and control measures to be included.

PART III

Regional research programme and scientific monitoring

10. CPCs with fishing fleets targeting Rapa whelk shall ensure that a mechanism for adequate scientific monitoring of Rapa whelk catches in the Black Sea is duly in place, with a view to facilitating the implementation of the regional research programme and to allowing the GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea to provide descriptive information and advice on at least the following:

- (a) deployed fishing effort (e.g. number of fishing days/week) and the overall catch level at national or supranational levels, indicating the fishing gears used,
- (b) data on overall by-catches' quantities by fishing gear and species, excluding scuba-diving,
- (c) biological and socio-economic effects of alternative management scenarios, including input/output and/or technical measures, such as fishing gears/environmental impacts, as proposed by the CPCs, and
- (d) possible spatio-temporal closures in order to preserve fishery sustainability.

The BlackSea4Fish project will facilitate and coordinate the assessment of relevant data at regional level under the regional research programme.

11. The GFCM Secretariat, with the support of the Working Group on the Black Sea, shall provide terms of reference, including costs, services and other requirements to support, through a call for tender, the implementation of a research programme on Rapa whelk in the Black Sea, as described in Annex I of this recommendation. The regional research programme shall be launched in 2019.

PART IV
Final provisions

12. In light of the results of the regional research programme referred to in Part III of this recommendation, the GFCM may propose and adopt new appropriate management and control measures, including the monitoring of the fishing activities and the catches.

Key elements of the regional research programme on rapa whelk in the Black Sea

Introduction

There is high need of Black Sea scientific and research projects aimed to fill gaps of knowledge on rapa whelk, a high commercial value species in the Black Sea. There was an increase in the coverage and the quality of data on the abundance of Rapa whelk with some data on length and age composition and based on them, the first Rapa whelk scientific assessment carried out by the GFCM Subregional Group on Stock Assessment in the Black Sea scientific working group, in 2017. However, the overall lack in the Black Sea of fisheries-independent surveys covering the regional distribution of the main commercial species in a comprehensive manner persists.

Main features of the regional research programme on Rapa whelk in the Black Sea

- Clear objectives defined in advance (e.g. biomass in ton, abundance in no/sqkm2, spatiotemporal distribution patterns)
- Priority given to the collection of data useful for the provision of the scientific advice in support of management (length, age, life-cycle)
- Combination of fishery dependent and fisheries independent sources of information to ensure a regular monitoring
- All Black Sea CPCs should be involved;
- The Black Sea regional research programme should also provide guidelines and facilitate harmonization, standardization of protocols, coordination and comparison of results obtained by past, ongoing and future national, regional and international research programmes addressing Rapa whelk, such as GFCM BlackSea4Fish Project.

Work packages

Work packages are designed to address the main issues required as before-mentioned, as well as to address the need to evaluate the social and economic aspects of this fishery, in the context of the sustainable management and exploitation of the stock.

Work Package 1 – Biology and Ecology

Work Package 2 – Fishery independent data collection – Surveys at sea

Work Package 3 – Fishery dependent data collection

Work Package 4 – Stock assessment

Work Package 5 – Socioeconomic elements

Work Package 6 – Management proposals

Main objectives of each work package

WP 1 - Biology and Ecology of Rapa whelk, including demography: Studies on size/ density, abundance, biomass, recruitment, growth, reproduction, physiology, environmental parameters, habitat, feeding and by-catches surveys. Ecology: Genetics, interactions with other species, impacts of fishing gears to marine environment.

WP 2 - Fishery independent data collection through multiannual demersal beam trawl/dredges surveys at sea, e.g. biomass and abundance indices, size/age distribution, by-catches.

WP 3 - Fishery dependent data collection through port sampling, e.g. landings, length/distribution, fishing techniques used and vessels engaged to the fishing activity, value, and through observers on board, e.g. by-catches, days at sea.

WP 4 - Stock assessment: Investigation on methodologies for assessing the status of Rapa whelk, including by compiling historical data.

WP 5 - Socioeconomic elements: Socioeconomic survey on the sector, trade, markets and development of economic indicators, external aspects affecting the fishery, economic sustainability of related fishing gears.

WP 6 - Management proposals: identification of possible additional measures through MSE, for the sustainability of the Rapa whelk fisheries.

Implementation of the regional research programme

The GFCM shall:

- Assess progress in the different work packages,
- Define standardized methods (e.g. in ageing) as well as research protocols, and
- Organize capacity building activities.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/11 on access to information and data related to monitoring, control and surveillance within the framework of joint inspection and surveillance schemes

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter "the GFCM"),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the Establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter "the Agreement") is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING Resolution GFCM/35/2011/2 on data confidentiality policy and procedures, amending Resolution GFCM/30/2006/1;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;

RECALLING that this plan stipulates that the CPCs shall cooperate with each other and with the GFCM Secretariat to identify and discourage those nationals who are the operators and/ or beneficial owners of vessels involved in IUU fishing;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/1 on a regional scheme on port State measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities in the GFCM area of application;

CONCERNED by the continuation of IUU fishing activities in the GFCM area of application, and that these activities diminish the effectiveness of the GFCM conservation and management measures;

RECOGNIZING that the identification of a vessel greatly facilitates MCS activities in combating IUU fishing activities, and the need to develop and to implement such measures in a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner;

ADOPTS, in conformity with the provisions of Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, that:

PART I
General objective and scope

1. The purpose of the present recommendation is to enhance access and exchange of information as essential components of an effective Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) system and consequently, sound fisheries management.
2. This recommendation shall apply to all CPCs engaged in pilot projects or international schemes for joint inspection and surveillance in the GFCM area of application.

PART II
Access to data and information

3. On request from CPCs engaged in inspection and control activities in the convention area and under the agreement of the CPC flag state, the GFCM Secretariat shall make available all information maintained at the Secretariat pursuant to GFCM conservation and management measures, including but not limited to updated lists of authorized vessels and lists of designated landing ports.

4. CPCs and the GFCM Secretariat shall ensure the secure treatment of the information referred to §3, and related data, reports and messages, in particular where the processing involves transmission over an electronic network.
5. The GFCM Secretariat shall implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect data, reports and messages against accidental or unlawful destruction or accidental loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure or access, and against all inappropriate forms of processing.
6. This recommendation shall not prejudice to the level of protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data under the provisions of national law.

PART III
Entry into force

7. The CPCs shall transpose this recommendation into their national legislation, consistent with Articles 5 (b), 8 (b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement. Where appropriate, they shall seek the support of the GFCM Secretariat so as to facilitate the transposition of this plan into their national legislation.

Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/12 on the marking of fishing gear

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter "the GFCM"),

CONSIDERING that the objective of the Agreement for the Establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter "the Agreement") is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance, adopted by the FAO Committee on Fisheries at its thirty-first session (FAO headquarters, June 2014);

NOTING that the United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (Fish Stocks Agreement), the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) and the Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (Compliance Agreement);

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/1 on a regional scheme on port State measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities in the GFCM area of application;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;

CONCERNED by the continuation of IUU fishing activities in the GFCM area of application, and that these activities diminish the effectiveness of the GFCM conservation and management measures;

FURTHER NOTING that the requirements for action on marking of fishing gear are global in scope and apply also to sub-regional, regional and global organizations concerned with the conservation of fishery resources and management and development of fisheries;

RECOGNIZING that the identification of a fishing gear greatly facilitates monitoring, control and surveillance activities in combating IUU fishing activities, and the need to develop and to implement such measures in a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner;

ADOPTS, in conformity with the provisions of Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, that:

PART I
Marking of fishing gears

1. Each flag CPC should ensure that passive fishing gears, such as set nets, pots, lines and long lines, used by fishing vessels larger than 15 meters in length overall authorized to fish species managed by GFCM in the Convention area, are marked in such a way that they can be readily identified in accordance with national laws and generally accepted standards such as the FAO standard specification for the marking of fishing gears.
2. The GFCM Working Group on Fishing Technology (WG-FIT) is invited to include among its activities the possibility to facilitate the exchange experiences among countries in relation to the marking of fishing gears.
3. Each flag CPC's should increase awareness amongst its fishing vessels and fishers about the

importance of marking fishing gears for fighting against IUU, abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear.

PART II
Special Requirements of developing countries

4. The CPCs are aware that a fully application of this resolution requires technically competent implementation and operation by all CPCs and the GFCM Secretariat. To this end, the capacity of developing countries to implement this resolution will be taken into account by the GFCM and all CPCs in accordance with Article 17 of the GFCM Agreement, in particular by way of technical assistance.

PART III
Final Provisions

5. The application of this resolution should not prejudice to the adoption by the CPCs of any other provisions or regulations which could imply stricter requirements and obligation in relation with the marking of fishing gears.

6. This recommendation will enter into force at the latest on 1 January 2022.

Protocols for the protection of VMEs in the GFCM area of application

A –VME encounter reporting protocol in the GFCM area of application

1. Introduction

Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on sustainable fisheries of 2004², 2006³ and 2009⁴ call upon regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to take urgent action to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) from significant adverse impact in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

2. Objective

Further implement the precautionary approach for managing deep-sea fisheries (DSF) with respect to VMEs, due to the difficulty in acquiring data on VMEs location and extent and with a view to avoiding the risk of significant adverse impacts (SAIs) by fisheries, GFCM should adopt a VME Encounter Protocol for the DSF operating in its area of application.

GFCM Contracting Party or Cooperating non-Contracting Party (CPCs) should consider, as necessary, applying additional management measures to their flagged vessels undertaking DSF to avoid overexploitation of resources and to avoid SAIs on VMEs.

3. Definitions

The list of VME Indicator Features, Habitats and Taxa for the Mediterranean Sea is given in Annex 1.

4. Scope

- *Geographical coverage*: Mediterranean Sea (GSAs 01 to 28)
- *Fisheries*

The following fisheries shall be considered:

- i. all fishing vessels above 15 m (LOA) operating with bottom contact fishing gear fishing for *Aristaeomorpha foliacea*, *Aristeus antennatus*, or *Plesionika martia*
- ii. all fishing vessels above 15 m (LOA) operating with bottom contact gears (bottom trawls, longlines, gillnets and pots and traps) at depths deeper than 300 m and all offshore seamounts;

For the purposes of these technical elements, the fisheries described above shall be referred to as “deep-sea fisheries” (DSFs).

5. Encounter protocol

- *Encounter*: an encounter with VME Indicator Taxa is defined as any catch of VME Indicator Taxa obtained by any DSF.

Encounter rule: following an encounter with VME Indicator Taxa during DSF, the vessel captain shall immediately report the encounter to the flag State, on the form provided in Annex 2, including the following information:

- i. the position of the vessel, either by the start and end point of the tow or set, or by another position that is closest to the exact encounter location;
- ii. the fishing characteristics of the vessel;

² A/RES/59/25

³ A/RES/61/105

⁴ A/RES/64/72

- iii. the groups of the VME Indicator Taxa encountered and the best estimates of their live weight (kg).

6. Reporting to GFCM Secretariat

Upon notification by the vessel captain, as described above, relevant CPCs shall forward, within 30 days, the encounter information reported by the vessel captain, to the GFCM Secretariat, including by electronic means.

7. Review of the information gathered by mean of the VME Encounter Protocol

The GFCM Secretariat shall compile the data received with the encounter protocols and set up maps of the distribution of encounters with VME Indicator Taxa, including their abundance by group. The GFCM Secretariat shall regularly inform the SAC about the reported catches of VME Indicator Taxa in Mediterranean fisheries. The SAC shall review this information and, based upon the best scientific evidence available, evaluate the occurrence of VMEs and propose to the Commission, as appropriate, the establishment of new management measures, including FRAs, to ensure the protection of these ecosystems.

8. Observers

The use of scientific observers to assist the crew in data collection is encouraged in order to allow the identification of the VME Indicator Taxa to the lowest taxonomic level and to obtain information on bycatch composition.

9. CPCs responsibilities

CPCs should consider adopting temporary closures and apply these to their flagged vessels if they consider that the encounter has identified a VME. Any measure adopted in this sense should be reported to the GFCM Secretariat for further notification to the SAC.

Mediterranean VME indicator features, habitats and taxa
(a) Mediterranean VME indicator features

The following features potentially support VMEs:

Seamounts and volcanic ridges
 Canyons and trenches
 Steep slopes
 Submarine reliefs (*slumped blocks, ridges, cobble fields, etc.*)
 Cold seeps (*pockmarks, mud volcanoes, reducing sediment, anoxic pools, methanogenetic hard bottoms*)
 Hydrothermal vents

(b) Mediterranean VME indicator habitats

The following habitats potentially support VMEs:

Cold-water coral reefs
 Coral gardens
 - Hard-bottom coral garden
 - Soft-bottom coral gardens
 Sea pen fields
 Deep-sea sponge aggregations
 - “Ostur” sponge aggregations
 - Hard-bottom sponge gardens
 - Glass sponge communities
 - Soft-bottom sponge gardens
 Tube-dwelling anemone patches
 Crinoid fields
 Oyster reefs and other giant bivalves
 Seep and vent communities
 Other dense emergent fauna

(c) Mediterranean VME indicator taxa

Phylum	Class	Subclass (Order)
Cnidaria	Anthozoa	Hexacorallia (Antipatharia, Scleractinia) Octocorallia (Alcyonacea, Pennatulacea) Ceriantharia
	Hydrozoa	Hydroidolina
Porifera (sponges)	Demospongiae	
	Hexactinellida	Amphidiscophora Hexasterophora
Bryozoa	Gymnolaemata	
	Stenolaemata	
Echinodermata	Crinoidea	Articulata
Mollusca	Bivalvia	Gryphaeidae (<i>Neopycnodonte cochlear</i> , <i>N. zibrowii</i>)
		Heterodonta* (Lucinoidea) (e.g. <i>Lucinoma kazani</i>)
		Pteriomorpha* (Mytiloidea) (e.g. <i>Idas modiolaeformis</i>)
Annelida*	Polychaeta	Sedentaria (Canalipalpata) (e.g. <i>Lamellibrachia anaximandri</i> , <i>Siboglinum</i> spp.)
Arthropoda*	Malacostraca	Eumalacostraca (Amphipoda) (e.g. <i>Haploops</i> spp.)

*only chemosynthetic species that indicate the presence of a cold seep or hydrothermal vent are considered

VME encounter reporting in the GFCM area of application

Separate forms to be completed for each deployment of the fishing gear (haul/set) in which VME Indicator Taxa are caught.

A. Fishing Trip Information	
Country:	
Vessel name:	
Captain (name and last name):	
Date of encounter (dd/mm/yyyy):	
B. Fleet and gear information⁵	
Fleet segment:	
Fishing gear:	
C. VME Encounter coordinates	
GSA:	Statistical grid:
Point 1 (Start)	Point 2 (End)
Latitude:	Longitude:
Latitude:	Longitude:
Fishing depth (average or range, m):	
VME Feature and/or Habitat (Annex 1 a and b)	
D. VME Indicator Taxa catch information (Annex 1 c)	
Total live weight of corals in the haul/set (kg):	
Total live weight of sponges in the haul/set (kg):	
Total live weight of other vulnerable benthic taxa in the haul/set (kg):	
E. VME Indicator Taxa (by trained observers on board)	
<i>Identify VME Taxa to lowest taxonomic level (species if possible) and provide comments.</i>	
F. Pictures of VME Indicator Taxa (by fishers and/or observers on board)	
<i>Take pictures of the different VME Indicator Taxa and submit them as an attachment to the current form.</i>	

⁵ Refer to: GFCM, 2016. GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF) (<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/data/dcrf/en/>)

B - Mapping existing deep-sea fishing areas in the GFCM area of application

1. Introduction

Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on sustainable fisheries of 2004⁶, 2006⁷ and 2009⁸ call upon regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to take urgent action to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) from significant adverse impact in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

2. Objectives

The deep-sea bottom fisheries of the Mediterranean target only a few species that are fished on specific habitats. In order to manage these fisheries sustainably, and prohibit any significant adverse impacts they may cause on non-target species and VMEs, it is necessary to map the distribution of the existing deep-sea bottom fishing areas.

3. Definitions

“Existing deep-sea bottom fishing areas”, means that portion of the GFCM area of application where deep-sea bottom fishing has occurred according to the map adopted under Section B Paragraph 5..

“Exploratory (or new) deep-sea bottom fishing” occurs during the initial development phase of a DSF when the DSF operates in areas that have not been previously fished or in fished areas following significant changes in the gear or effort, as described in paragraphs 23, 55, 61 and 65 of the *FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries in the High Seas*.

4. Scope

- *Geographical coverage*: Mediterranean Sea (GSAs 01 to 28)
- *Fisheries*

The following fisheries shall be considered:

- i. bottom trawlers above 15 m (LOA) fishing for *Aristaeomorpha foliacea*, *Aristeus antennatus*, or *Plesionika martia*;
- ii. all fishing vessels above 15 m (LOA) operating with bottom contact gears (bottom trawls, longlines, gillnets and pots and traps) at depths deeper than 300 m and all offshore seamounts;

For the purposes of these technical elements, the fisheries described above shall be referred to as “deep-sea fisheries” (DSFs).

5. Management measure

GFCM Contracting Party or Cooperating non-Contracting Party (CPCs) with vessels involved in “deep-sea bottom fisheries” shall submit to the extent possible and no later than 31 December 20[20] comprehensive maps of existing deep-sea bottom fishing areas [during the five-year period of 2012-2016] to the GFCM Secretariat. Maps shall be based on VMS/AIS data and/or other available geo-reference data and be expressed in as precise spatial and temporal resolution as possible. The submission of the detailed gear deployment position information will facilitate the mapping process. Priorities should be given to bottom trawling below 300 m, but it is highly desirable to map other types of fishing gears that contact the seafloor during normal use, e.g. bottom set longlines, gillnets, trammel nets, and pots. Contracting Parties may, in the future, consider the possibility of refining these maps on the basis of haul-by-haul information, if available. GFCM Secretariat shall compile a composite map, preferably by gear type, of the existing deep-sea bottom fishing areas within the GFCM area of application. The SAC shall review this information and based upon the scientific evidence available, adopt the map

⁶ A/RES/59/25

⁷ A/RES/61/105

⁸ A/RES/64/72

defining the existing bottom fishing areas in the GFCM area of application. The map shall be revised regularly to incorporate any new relevant information.

C - Exploratory deep-sea bottom fishing reporting protocol in the GFCM area of application

1. Introduction

Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on sustainable fisheries of 2004⁹, 2006¹⁰ and 2009¹¹ call upon regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to take urgent action to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) from significant adverse impact in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

2. Objectives

To ensure that exploratory or new deep-sea fishing activities are only allowed to expand at a rate consistent with the knowledge and management of that fishery. This will avoid overexploitation of targeted deep-sea fish stocks. Further, great care needs to be taken to ensure that VMEs are mapped and known, and suitable mitigation measures applied to ensure their protection from significant adverse impacts resulting from any new fishery.

3. Definitions

“Existing deep-sea bottom fishing areas”, means that portion of the GFCM area of application where deep-sea bottom fishing has occurred according to the map adopted under Section B Paragraph 5.

“Exploratory (or new) deep-sea bottom fishing” occurs during the initial development phase of a DSF when the DSF operates in areas that have not been previously fished or in fished areas following significant changes in the gear or effort, as described in paragraphs 23, 55, 61 and 65 of the *FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries in the High Seas*.

4. Scope

- *Geographical coverage:* Mediterranean Sea (GSAs 01 to 28)
-
- *Fisheries:* All fishing vessels above 15 m (LOA) operating with bottom contact gears (bottom trawls, longlines, gillnets and pots and traps) are considered undertaking Exploratory (or new) deep-sea bottom fishing when operating:
 - i. On VME Indicator Features (see Annex 1 a)
 - ii. Outside of the existing bottom deep-sea fishing areas
 - iii. Inside of existing bottom fishing areas with bottom-contact fishing gears not previously used or when significant increases of effort are planned or when a new fishery is developing

5. Management measure

GFCM Contracting Party or Cooperating non-Contracting Party (CPCs) of flagged fishing vessels undertaking exploratory (or new) deep-sea bottom fishing shall be required to complete the Exploratory deep-sea bottom fishing protocol provided in Annex 1, including the following information:

- i. the start and end point of each tow or set;
- ii. the fishing characteristics of the vessel including the gear used;
- iii. the GSA area and the Statistical Grid where the exploratory deep-sea fishing occurred;

⁹A/RES/59/25

¹⁰A/RES/61/105

¹¹A/RES/64/72

- iv. the catch, the bycatch, the discards, and fishing effort;
- v. VME Indicator Taxa (if any) through the VME Encounter Protocol.

6. Reporting to GFCM Secretariat

Upon notification by the vessel captain, as described above, relevant CPCs shall forward, within 30 days, the exploratory deep-sea bottom protocol form reported by the vessel captain, to the GFCM Secretariat, including by electronic means.

7. Review of the information gathered through the exploratory deep-sea bottom protocol

The GFCM Secretariat shall compile the data received with the exploratory deep-sea bottom protocol and shall regularly inform the SAC. The SAC shall review this information.

8. Observers

The use of scientific observers to assist in data collection and reporting is highly desirable according to the GFCM DCRF¹².

¹²Refer to: GFCM, 2016. GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF) (<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/data/dcrf/en/>).

Exploratory deep-sea fishing reporting in the GFCM area of application (Mediterranean Sea)

Separate forms must be completed for each new exploratory deep-sea fishing trip

A. Fishing Trip Information
Country:
Vessel name:
Captain (name and last name):
Dates of exploratory fishing trip (dd/mm/yyyy format):

B. Fleet and gear information¹³
Fleet segment:
Fishing gear:

Area information	
GSA:	Statistical grid¹⁴:
Area fished (coordinates-attach map):	
VME Indicator Feature (if any):	
Depth range fished (m):	
Fishing effort:	

C. Catch summary
<i>List main commercial species and quantities caught during the exploratory deep-sea bottom fishing</i>

D. Bycatch summary
<i>Provide details of bycatch species</i>

D. VME Indicator Taxa
<i>Use the provided VME Encounter Protocol for any catch of VME Indicator Taxa</i>

E. Comments (by fishing crew)

¹³ Refer to: GFCM, 2016. GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF) (<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/data/dcrf/en>)

¹⁴ Refer to: Appendix M - Geographic statistical grid for red coral, DCRF. GFCM, 2016. GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF)

Updated table of priority species
(new species in bold)

	Western Mediterranean	Central Mediterranean	Adriatic Sea	Eastern Mediterranean	Black Sea
Pelagic species	<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>
	<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	<i>Sardinella aurita</i>	<i>Trachurus mediterraneus</i>
				<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>
Demersal species	<i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i>	<i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i>	<i>Mullus barbatus</i>	<i>Mullus barbatus</i>	<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>
	<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	<i>Saurida lessepsianus</i>	<i>Scophthalmus maximus</i>
	<i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>	<i>Aristeus antennatus</i>	<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>
		<i>Aristaeomorpha foliacea</i>	<i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i> (GSA 18)	<i>Aristeus antennatus</i>	<i>Rapana venosa</i>
		<i>Mullus barbatus</i>	<i>Solea solea</i> (GSA 17)	<i>Aristaeomorpha foliacea</i>	
			<i>Sepia officinalis</i> <i>Squilla mantis</i>		
Species of regional importance		<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>			
Species of conservation concern	<i>Anguilla Anguilla</i>				
	<i>Corallium rubrum</i>				<i>Squalus acanthias</i>
Non-indigenous species	<i>Pterois miles</i>				
	<i>Lagocephalus sceleratus</i>				

Terms of reference for selected activities

Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Marine Protected Areas (WGMPA)

1. Review the state of FRAs in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, including an assessment of the state of the ecosystem and human dimension and assess the benefits of FRAs for protection and recovery of endangered /overexploited stocks in the GFCM area
2. Identify potential new FRAs, including both ecosystem and socioeconomic analysis and identification of needs for a formal protection proposal.
3. Review of the state of implementation of Resolution GFCM/41/2017/5 on a network of EFH, including advances on the implementation of the roadmap proposed by the SAC
4. Advise the sac on any EFH/VME related matters and coordinate the elaboration of management tools (including future protocols)

Terms of Reference of consultant(s) on selectivity and fishing technology within the remit of the WGFiT

In liaison with the chairperson of WGFiT, as well as with the network of experts associated with the WG, the consultant(s) shall:

1. Assess and evaluate the information already available on fishing technology by country, including the results of previous projects
2. Analyse GFCM decisions related to selectivity and fishing technology
3. Develop a medium-term (3-4 years) program of work towards defining a clear research program to address GFCM priorities in relation to fishing technology and selectivity
4. Develop and advance on a pilot project on the study of selectivity in the central Mediterranean (Strait of Sicily), following the ToRs provided by the 42nd Session of the GFCM

Terms of reference for a pilot project on selective trawl fisheries in the gulf of gabes

- A. The 41st session of the GFCM Commission agreed on setting up a permanent Working Group on Fisheries Technology (WGFiT). The 42nd session of the GFCM Commission noted that fisheries selectivity may be improved through making fishing gears more selective, in particular trawls.
- B. In addition to the long term objectives and Terms of Reference agreed for WGFiT, the 42nd session of the GFCM Commission agreed on setting up a pilot project aiming at proposing concrete recommendations to increase the selectivity of trawl fisheries targeting hake and deep-sea rose shrimp in the Gulf of Gabès.
- C. It is noted that information and operational results are already available to help provide such advice:
 - technical trials and studies on gear selectivity
 - studies on the socio-economic effects of implementing such selective gears

- D. The European Union agreed to provide the results of the studies conducted in the framework of Minouw, DiscardLess and other studies conducted in the framework of the EU structural and research funds for fisheries. The other CPCs concerned also agreed to provide the results of relevant studies.
- E. The 42nd session of the GFCM Commission concurred on the necessity to involve all the CPCs concerned by trawling activities taking place in the Gulf of Gabès and more generally, to involve all the CPCs willing to cooperate on this pilot project. The 42nd session also agreed that it would be desirable to duplicate this pilot project in other areas of the Mediterranean, in due time and as appropriate.

The pilot project shall unfold as follows:

1. A qualified fisheries technology expert with relevant experience in Mediterranean fisheries shall be recruited as soon as possible in 2019 to conduct the pilot project.
2. The first task of the expert shall be to compile the information and the operational results referred to in point C and D.
3. With the assistance of the GFCM Secretariat, the expert shall prepare a report focussing on concrete recommendations to improve the selectivity of the trawl fisheries operating in the Gulf of Gabès, taking into account the specificities and the socio-economic structure of such fleets.
4. The expert shall present its report and recommendations to the 2019 annual session of the SAC.
5. Upon assessment of the report, the SAC may issue recommendations to the 43rd session of the Commission.

GFCM autonomous budget for 2019

		US (\$)	Share of total %
STAFF	Professional staff (10)	1 371 000	54.04%
	Administrative staff (7)	454 000	17.89%
	TOTAL STAFF	1 825 000	71.93%
FUNCTIONING	Temporary human resources (Security Guards, admin. support, overtime)	40 000	1.58 %
	Consultants (including translators of scientific publications)	40 000	1.58 %
	Travel (Staff, Bureau, Coordinators, Interpreters, Experts' DSA and tickets)	95 000	3.74 %
	Training	8 000	0.32 %
	Expendable procurement (including printing of publications)	12 000	0.47 %
	Non-expendable procurement	6 000	0.24 %
	General operating expenses	15 000	0.59 %
	Internal/External services backcharge	165 000	6.50 %
	TOTAL FUNCTIONING	441 000	2.36 %
SUBTOTAL 1 (staff + functioning)		2 266 000	
ANCLARY	Hospitality and Miscellaneous (1 %)	22 660	
	Participation Fund (2.5 %)	57 217	
	SUBTOTAL 2	2 345 877	
	FAO Support Costs (4.5% of subtotal 2)	105 564	
	SUBTOTAL 3	2 451 441	
	GFCM Working Capital Fund (3.5% of subtotal 3)	85 800	
AUTONOMOUS BUDGET (US Dollars)		2 537 241	

**Contributions to the GFCM budget for 2019
(based on 2014-2016 averages)**

Member	US \$	%	US \$	Index	US \$	Weighted Total	US \$
Albania	25,813	1.02	11,031	1	6,343	25,598	8,439
Algeria	79,944	3.15	11,031	1	6,343	189,800	62,569
Bulgaria	17,375	0.68	11,031	1	6,343		
Croatia	74,463	2.93	11,031	10	63,431		
Cyprus	74,463	2.93	11,031	10	63,431		
Egypt	78,811	3.11	11,031	1	6,343	186,365	61,437
France	137,893	5.43	11,031	20	126,862		
Greece	74,463	2.93	11,031	10	63,431		
Israel							
Italy	137,893	5.43	11,031	20	126,862		
Japan	137,893	5.43	11,031	20	126,862		
Lebanon	20,902	0.82	11,031	1	6,343	10,700	3,527
Libya	45,665	1.80	11,031	1	6,343	85,817	28,290
Malta	74,463	2.93	11,031	10	63,431		
Monaco	11,031	0.43	11,031				
Montenegro	12,343	0.49	11,031			3,980	1,312
Morocco	37,466	1.48	11,031	1	6,343	60,946	20,091
Romania	17,375	0.68	11,031	1	6,343		
Slovenia	74,463	2.93	11,031	10	63,431		
Spain	74,463	2.93	11,031	10	63,431		
Syria	19,284	0.76	11,031	1	6,343	5,793	1,910
Tunisia	139,188	5.49	11,031	1	6,343	369,514	121,813
Turkey	402,477	15.86	11,031	10	63,431	995,014	328,015
EC	769,110	30.31	11,031			2,299,589	758,079
		100		140		4,233,117	
	2,537,241		253,724		888,034		1,395,483

Total budget	2,537,241	US \$
Basic fee	10%	of total budget
	253,724	US \$
Number of Members*	23	
Total budget less basic fee	2,283,517	US \$
GDP component	35%	of total budget
	888,034	US \$
Catch component	55%	of total budget
	1,395,483	US \$

* Members paying their contributions to the autonomous budget