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Rome, 07 February 2024

To Valerie Lainé
MARE D1 Fisheries management
Mediterranean and Black Sea
Cc MARE-AC

Object - MEDAC Letter on the GFCM Workshop on Adriatic Sea small pelagics MSE February 1, Online, via Zoom

On 1st of February the GFCM Workshop on Adriatic Sea small pelagics MSE has been held online. The MEDAC Secretariat and some of the members (the Italian representatives of the fishery sector) attended.

Before this planned meeting the MEDAC Secretariat already underlined by mail the difficulties for stakeholders to be truly informed and then to be able to provide a contribution on this complex topic due also to the communication method adopted. In fact, despite the objective of the meeting, the following problems caused a real limitation for the consultation of stakeholders:

The informative workshop was marked by a significant lack of communication, which made it essentially useless:

- English was the only working language
- meeting times and agenda were communicated less than 48 hours before the meeting
- the background document/the questions are completely incomprehensible to those who not scientific experts are
- very low stakeholder participation (complete absence of Croatians, Montenegrins, Albanians and NGOs).

As regards the scientific content, as far as possible, it has been noted that:

- there is no evidence that the MSE process takes into account socio-economic aspects, and how it will be carried out;
- the used examples of HCRs and MSE at global level are not at all comparable to the reality of the Adriatic
- the questions have not been exemplified or detailed, and they are incomprehensible, making an informed answer impossible. It is necessary that the relevant GFCM experts exemplify the questions asked if a real stakeholder input is required, as has been done for other species (MSE bluefin tuna ICCAT) and as already pointed out by the MEDAC Secretariat at SRC Adriatic in May 2023 in Split, where it was requested that the stakeholder consultation be

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started by October, to allow adequate time/information/ training to the stakeholders.

The MEDAC kindly asks for your collaboration in finding the best way to proceed in the stakeholder involvement for the MSE in Adriatic and ahead towards the future MSE processes in the Mediterranean.

The Chair of the MEDAC

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