MEDAC - Registered Office Via XX Settembre, 20 - c/o MIPAFT - 00187 Rome (Italy) - Tax identification number 97534810581 - Association registered with the Prefecture of Rome as a legal entity n.1224/2017

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Rome, 21 June 2019

To João Aguiar Machado

Director General Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

To Roland Kristo

GFCM Chairperson

Re: Multiannual management plan for demersal resources in the Adriatic Sea

The MEDAC Focus Group on the Adriatic met on 4th June in Thessaloniki and, among other matters, discussed some of the issues related to the multiannual plan for demersal resources in the Adriatic Sea that had already been mentioned during the 4th meeting of the GFCM SAC SRC-AS, held on 23rd and 24th May in Split.

On that occasion, draft elements for the management of demersal resources in the Adriatic were listed in order to evaluate their inclusion in the formulation of a MAP, among which there were:

- depth restrictions
- Other spatial restrictions
- Distance from the coast

Debate on the matter highlighted the well-known fact that the average depth of the Adriatic basin is 252 m, however in the Northern part (GSA17) it rarely exceeds 100 m. Moreover, there are already several spatial constraints and restrictions (these include military sites, marine protected areas and biological protection zones, offshore regasification facilities, oil platforms) that reduce the free movement of the fishing fleet in the areas concerned. In the case of some ports or in the area around Trieste and the Slovenian coast these restrictions make the available space extremely limited and this is coupled with very shallow waters.

Deep concern was expressed by the majority of participants that in the forthcoming formulation of a MAP for demersal resources in the Adriatic, the same approach used for the equivalent Plan in the Western Mediterranean would be applied, without considering the unique geomorphological characteristics of the Adriatic basin that would make the same restrictions completely unfeasible.

However, MEDAC acknowledged the results of the spatial measures that were implemented in the Jabuka pit, showing substantial increases on biomass of key commercial species (hake, nephrops and pink shrimp) that were presented.

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We also wish to point out, as noted by the MEDAC representative who was present in Split, that for each alternative management measure fleet capacity should also be taken into account, to make sure the number of vessels that would be sustainable after the implementation of a given measure is known. Furthermore, socio-economic impacts should be deeply assessed in order to avoid the same socioeconomic approach applied for the equivalent MAP in the Western Mediterranean.

The concerns expressed herein reflect our wish to contribute constructively to the implementation of the GFCM recommendations in the Mediterranean based on the best scientific advices by STECF and GFCM and we are certain that you will take these matters into due consideration, we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Giampaolo Buonfiglio
President

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