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## Office of Evaluation

**FAO implemented projects in the Adriatic and Straits of Sicily: GCP /RER/010/ITA AdriaMed and MedSudMed; GCP /RER/021/EC and GDCP/INT/010/ITA**

*Evaluation report*

## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

### Office of Evaluation (OED)

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## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Evaluation background .....	1
1.2	Purpose of the evaluation.....	3
1.3	Evaluation methodology .....	3
<b>2</b>	<b>Context of the project/programme.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Concept and relevance.....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1	Project design.....	5
3.2	Relevance .....	5
<b>4</b>	<b>Implementation .....</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1	Budget and expenditure .....	6
4.2	Projects management .....	8
4.2.1	<i>Institutional set-up .....</i>	<i>8</i>
4.2.2	<i>Implementation, work-plans and monitoring mechanisms .....</i>	<i>9</i>
4.2.3	<i>Technical and administrative backstopping .....</i>	<i>12</i>
4.2.4	<i>Governments' participation.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>Results and contribution to stated objectives.....</b>	<b>13</b>
5.1	Outputs and outcomes.....	13
5.2	Gender equality .....	16
5.3	Capacity Development.....	17
5.4	Impact and sustainability .....	17
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusions and recommendations.....</b>	<b>18</b>
6.1	Conclusions.....	18
6.2	Recommendations.....	19

Annex 1, Evaluation terms of reference

Annex 2, Profile of team members

Annex 3, List of documents reviewed

Annex 4, List of institutions and stakeholders met during the evaluation process

## **Acronyms**

AdriaMed	Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible fisheries in the Adriatic Sea, GCP/RER/010/ITA
ATrIS	AdriaMed Trawl Survey Information System
BH	Budget Holder
CAQ	Committee on Aquaculture of the GFCM
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser – Project Coordinator
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries
EC	European Community
EOD	Entry On Duty – Beginning Date
FIR	Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division, Fisheries Dept., FAO
FIRF	Marine and Inland Fisheries Group, (FIR Division, Fisheries Dept., FAO
FPMIS	Field Project Management Information System
FWP	GFCM Framework Programme
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
GSA	GFCM Geographical Sub Area
IAMC-CNR	Istituto per lo studio dell' Ambiente Marino Costiero, Italy
INSTM	Institut National des Sciences & Technologies de la Mer, Tunisia
LoA	Letter of Agreement
LTO/U	Lead Technical Officer/Unit
MedSudMed	Assessment and Monitoring of the Fisheries Resources and the Ecosystems in the Straits of Sicily, GCP /RER/010/ITA
MBRC	Marine Biology Research Centre of Tajura, Lybia
MIPAAF	Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies
MRRA	Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation Department, Malta
MPAs	Marine Protected Areas
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NTE	Not-To-Exceed – End Date
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation
OPS	Operations Unit
PMU	Project Management Unit
ProDoc	Project Document
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee (GFCM)
USD	United States Dollar

## **Executive Summary**

ES1. In the Adriatic Sea and the south-central Mediterranean most of the fisheries resources are shared and their trans-boundary nature justifies harmonised scientific and management approaches. In these regions several fish stocks appear to be under significant fishing pressure.

ES2. Since 1999, within the framework of its agreement with the Government of Italy and upon request from the participating governments through the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), FAO has been collaborating with the riverine countries in the Adriatic Sea and in the Straits of Sicily to enhance scientific collaboration for the improvement of sustainable management of the fish stocks. During this period, a total of four projects have been funded from different partners, as follows.

ES3. The AdriaMed project ‘Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea- GCP/RER/010/ITA’, has been funded by the Government of Italy through the MIPAAF over the period 1999-2012 through two phases. Participating countries since its start are the Republics of Albania, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia and Montenegro. This initiative was complemented in 2011-2012 by GCP/RER/021/EC, funded by the European Commission. Total funds allocated to this project amounted to almost USD 8.5 millions.

ES4. The MedSudMed project ‘Assessment and monitoring of the fisheries resources and the ecosystems in the Straits of Sicily, 2001-2012 - GCP/RER/010/ITA’. This initiative has been financed by the Government of Italy through the MIPAAF and was complemented in 2011-2012 by the Regione Siciliana-funded initiative ‘The role of the crustaceans as fisheries resources in the south-central Mediterranean - GDGP/INT/010/ITA’. Participating countries are Italy, Lybia, Malta and Tunisia. Total funds allocated to these projects amounted to almost USD 5.7 millions.

ES5. The objective of the final evaluation of these projects was to provide accountability to the participating Member Countries and resource partners on the extent of Projects’ results and to draw lessons and formulate recommendations for the potential future role and strategies of the Projects. Evaluation steps included:

- Documents review and analysis (previous reviews, projects technical documents, GFCM documents);
- Meetings of the Evaluation team with FAO administrative officers, project staff, the Executive Secretary of the GFCM and OED;
- Participation in the 2012 Coordination Committee meetings of the projects;
- Participation of the Evaluation Team Leader in other meetings of the GFCM in the period April-May 2012, further canvassing the views of Member Countries.

ES6. The team received very good collaboration from scientific and administrative key stakeholders in providing information, documentation, in responding to interviews and in removing any possible obstacle or constraint.

ES7. The Projects aimed at achieving a homogeneous level of research that would allow undertaking ecosystem-oriented activities and setting-up common fisheries management tools at sub regional level for the sustainable management of shared stocks. These objectives were based on the identification of priority research topics and training requirements

according to the needs of the National Fisheries Departments in the AdriaMed countries, the National Research Institutions in the MedSudMed countries, as well as at the level of GFCM to fill some gaps in scientific knowledge. Projects activities were organized on the basis of on-going national programmes, taking advantage of existing national activities and supporting data collection in areas that were not covered by the national surveys.

ES8. The Evaluation found strong evidence that the projects had been well managed and their strategies had been consistent with the expressed requirements of the participating countries; ad hoc training courses organized and run by the Projects have allowed national scientists to attend the GFCM SAC working groups and Sub Committees annual meetings and led to an upgrading of the national experts on specific issues. The scientific institutions involved in the projects have developed capacity and interest to share information among them. Assistance provided by international experts resulted in innovative research activities, whose main outputs respond to the national and international objectives in the field of sustainable fisheries management.

ES9. Rates of delivery for the 2008-2011 period show a constant and well monitored fund disbursement pattern, that fully reflects the events of the projects and the action of the Project Coordinators to successfully manage problems stemming from the progressive growth of the project. All Budget Revisions stemmed from the Coordinating Committee and the Evaluation found them to be coherent with the project principles and objectives, including operational aspects. Overall, BR allowed the project to steer its implementation according to its goals, despite some important budget cuts.

ES10. The Evaluation also considered that the distribution of management and technical responsibilities was inadequate and generated confusion due to duplications of functions and formal attribution of responsibilities not coinciding with knowledge and performance. Overall FI has given so far insufficient consideration to the strategic role of the projects in the overall scenario of FAO's interventions in the region and sub-regions and their future evolution.

ES11. The Evaluation formulated the following recommendations on operational aspects:

**Recommendation 1: To FIRF on project management and administration**

FIRF should review and re-define areas and levels of responsibility including criteria of assignment of functions; rationalise overlapping and duplications of roles among the Lead Technical Unit, Operations and the Chief Technical Advisor.

**Recommendation 2: To FIRF on project management and administration**

FIRF should:

- a) review attribution of Budget Holder Responsibility respecting the principle of best placed knowledge-cum responsibility; and
- b) appoint the Alternate Budget Holder and document appointment accordingly

**Recommendation 3: To the projects, on strengthening research and networks**

The projects should strengthen the following areas of work:

- a) improve the development and diffusion of scientific publications on activities and researches carried out within the projects, contribute to international scientific literature;
- b) enhance focus on multidisciplinary research in support of fisheries management compatible with EAF, by supporting the organisation of joint cooperative research activities with common and standardised procedures and reinforcing the activities on training and human capacity development of staff of fisheries institutions;
- c) enhance the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), by strengthening the capacity of the national institutions in terms of both human resources and organization, as well as direct support to the consultation process necessary for achieving this goal.

**Recommendation 4: To the projects, on areas for further support**

The projects should include activities aimed at:

- a) increasing the understanding of the role of small-scale and recreational fisheries (including biological, technological, and socio-economic aspects) and reinforce the institutional capacity to address and manage also this component of the fisheries systems;
- b) strengthening the capacity to explicitly include the interactions between capture fisheries and aquaculture in the management process;
- c) reinforcing research and capacity development on the socio-economic component of fisheries, including ad hoc studies on consumer's expectations, marketing problems, eco-labelling and product certification.

ES12. The Evaluation considered that AdriaMed and MedSudMed were on the way to soon reach the final goal of formulating harmonized fisheries management strategies for several important shared resources and to propose some important multinational recommendations aimed at their regional conservation to be proposed for adoption by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Thus, the Evaluation wanted to underline the importance of strengthening the linkages between the Projects and GFCM priorities and processes; this could be achieved in particular by enhancing stronger concentration and focus on fewer priority objectives dealing with fisheries management and a perspective for the continuation of the sub regional projects could be to develop synergies under the umbrella of the new GFCM Framework Programme for the period 2013-2018. Recommendation 5 below was formulated in this respect.

**Recommendation 5: To FI, the projects and GFCM**

All parties concerned, i.e. the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, GCP/RER/010/ITA and GFCM Secretariat, should develop by end of 2012 a road-map to be proposed to partners for discussion, endorsement and funding, that would allow the integration of AdriaMed and MedSudMed achievements within the 2013-2018 GFCM Framework Programme.



## **1 Introduction**

### ***1.1 Evaluation background***

1. The Adriatic Sea is a semi-enclosed basin and one of the largest areas of occurrence of shared stocks in the Mediterranean. Most of the pelagic and demersal fisheries resources in the basin migrate through national waters of different countries during their life cycle (e.g. juveniles that are recruited to the bottom in shallow coastal waters in the northern Adriatic, possibly move to deeper waters in the central and southern part of the basin and vice versa) and are shared between the fisheries of at least three countries. The Adriatic fishing fleets operate in national and international waters and the shared fisheries resources are exploited under different regimes in each country, while their trans-boundary nature justifies harmonised management approaches.

2. The Straits of Sicily is a large and dynamically active area connecting the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean Sea. In this area the fishing fleet of four countries (i.e. Italy, Libya, Malta and Tunisia) operate continuously through the year. The zone is one of the most important fishing spots in the Mediterranean, which may be explained by the transitional nature of this area, the spatial aspects of fishery target species ecology and the morphology of the bottom, combined with the hydrological configuration enhancing biological productivity.

3. Since 1999, within the framework of its agreement with the Government of Italy and upon request from the participating governments through the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), FAO has collaborated with the riverine countries in the Adriatic Sea and in the Straits of Sicily, to improve the sustainable management of the shared fish stocks, by enhancing scientific collaboration and overall capacity on these themes. The GFCM, established within the framework of Article XIV of FAO Constitution as a Regional Fisheries Management Organization, is a key player in the management of fisheries resources in the region.

4. During this period, a total of four projects have been funded from different partners, which are briefly described here below.

#### *AdriaMed Project - Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea - GCP/RER/010/ITA “*

5. This initiative has been operational in its first phase since September 1999 till September 2005, financed by the Government of Italy through the MIPAAF. The project was extended into its current second phase (AdriaMed II) for the period 2005-2012 with the Italian MIPAAF core funding and co-funding from the European Commission in the period from April 2007 to March 2008 and for 2010-2012. AdriaMed participating countries are the Republics of Albania, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia and Montenegro. Total funds allocated to this project amount to USD 8 millions.

#### *Scientific Cooperation to support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea- AdriaMed Phase II, GCP/RER/021/EC*

6. This EC contribution to the AdriaMed Project aims at building on the objectives and outputs of the first phase of the project, by consolidating and further developing the basis for establishing and implementing in each participating country and/or at multilateral level updated management plans for relevant specific fisheries, through coordinated scientific investigations and data-gathering, as well as through joint multidisciplinary analysis. The project was funded for 12 months duration, with a budget of USD 340,000. Its activities are fully mainstreamed within the plan of work and institutional set-up of AdriaMed.

*MedSudMed Project - Assessment and monitoring of the fisheries resources and the ecosystems in the Straits of Sicily, GCP/RER/010/ITA*

7. This initiative has been operational in its first phase since April 2001 till September 2006, financed by the Government of Italy through the MIPAAF. The project was then extended into its current second phase (MedSudMed II) for the period 2006-2012. Additional funds were secured to support the MedSudMed Project activities related to the crustacean resources through a contribution of the Regione Siciliana (Italy) for the period May 2011-December 2012. Total funds allocated to this project amount to USD 5.4 millions. Participating countries are Italy, Lybia, Malta and Tunisia. Main partners of the Project are the Lybian MBRC, the Tunisian INSTM, the Maltese MRRA and the Italian IAMC-CNR , Italy.

8. The project has been operational in its first phase from April 2001 until September 2006, financed by the Government of Italy through the MiPAAF. In 2005 an internal technical review of the Project was requested by the Coordination Committee. The Committee also gave indications of priority areas to be dealt with in future activities. The project was then extended into its current second phase (MedSudMed II) for the period 2006-2012. In 2009 another internal technical review given the achievements and positive results of the project and the repeated expressions of support and interest of all participating countries recommended a further extension of its support to the project.

*The role of the crustaceans as fisheries resources in the south-central Mediterranean, GDCP/INT/010/ITA*

9. This project was funded by the Italian Regione Siciliana through the modality of decentralized cooperation, a relatively new form of partnership that allows sub national government institutions in developed countries supporting similar entities in developing countries in the framework of the national development plans of the country concerned.

10. It aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the MedSudMed project on issues of great relevance in the south-central Mediterranean, like the execution of harmonised surveys at sea and the joint data analysis as baseline for the EAF. The project was funded for 18 months duration, with a budget of USD 262,000. Its activities are fully mainstreamed within the plan of work and institutional set-up of MedSudMed.

11. FAO Evaluation policy establishes that all projects with a budget above USD 4 million should be evaluated at least once in their lifetime. The two GCP/RER/010/ITA initiatives have been operational for more than a decade and over time, their respective budget size has reached the threshold. Hence, FAO Office of Evaluation, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and Project management and the donor agreed in mid-2011 that a

final evaluation in the first half of 2012 would contribute to take stock of achievements and challenges for both streams of work.

## **1.2 Purpose of the evaluation**

12. The Terms of Reference for the Evaluation, included in Annex 1 of this report, stated that the objective of the final evaluation was to provide accountability to the participating Member Countries, resource partners including the Italian MIPAAF, the European Commission, the Regione Siciliana and FAO, on the extent of Projects' results, including outputs, outcomes and impacts – actual and potential - to date.

13. The Evaluation was also to draw lessons and formulate recommendations for the potential future role and strategies of the Projects, aiming at enabling all key stakeholders to take decisions regarding the utilization of project results as well as on the design and implementation of similar projects in the future. Relevance of and perspectives for Projects' continuation will also be assessed.

## **1.3 Evaluation methodology**

14. The ToR established that the Evaluation should adopt a consultative and transparent approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. Triangulation of evidence and information gathered was to be used to underpin the validation of evidence collected and its analysis and support conclusions and recommendations. Further, the Evaluation was asked to adhere to UNEG Norms and Standards<sup>1</sup>.

15. The Evaluation process was managed by FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) in close collaboration with FIRF and the Project Management Unit. Steps were as follows:

- Documents review and analysis;
- Briefing of the Evaluation team in FAO HQ in March 2012: the team met FAO officers involved in the administrative and operation management of the projects, project staff, the Executive Secretary of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and OED. Extensive discussions were held on the evaluation purpose, scope and methodology, and on the substantive aspects of the work carried out by the projects, including administrative and operational aspects;
- Participation of the Evaluation team in the respective Coordination Committee meetings of: MedSudMed project, hold in Djerba, Tunisia on 13-15 March; and AdriaMed project, hold in Tirana, Albania 27-29 March;
- Participation of the Evaluation Team Leader in other meetings of the GFCM in the period April-May 2012, canvassing further the views of Member Countries.

16. These missions allowed to carry out interviews with projects staffs and with scientific and administrative key stakeholders from the national research institutions and governments of the countries participating in the projects. The Evaluation team also examined the previous reviews, various technical documents produced by the projects and the reports of the yearly Coordination Committees, as well as the GFCM documents stating the relationship between the FAO sub-regional projects and the GFCM.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards>

17. The final draft report will be circulated to FAO stakeholders for comments and suggestions, which the Evaluation team will integrate as appropriate.

## **2 Context of the project/programme**

18. Due to the trans-boundary nature of the marine resources and to the dynamics of the national fisheries, the Adriatic Sea and the south-central Mediterranean are among the best areas in the Mediterranean in which to investigate and characterise the interactions between the environmental factors, fisheries and fisheries resources and the possible impact of climate on marine productivity. In these areas, the spatial and temporal dynamics of fisheries resources is linked to the oceanographic and bottom features, and the fishing fleets operate in national and international waters. The shared fisheries resources are exploited under different regimes in each country, while their trans-boundary nature justifies harmonised scientific and management approaches.

19. According to the available data, several fish stocks in the Adriatic and south-central Mediterranean regions appear to be under significant fishing pressure; a reduction of fishing effort and changing in fishing pattern was generally recommended by the GFCM in order to ensure recovery and/or sustainable exploitation of the resources.

20. Achieving the optimal use of these fisheries resources requires an effective cooperative management framework based on accepted concepts like the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). This implies the development of capacity to cooperate for effective management of the fisheries resources in compliance with the EAF.

21. The strategy of both Projects was to establish and improve common efforts among the participating countries, thus expanding and utilizing the common knowledge which is required for the responsible management of the major living marine resources in the Project's areas.

22. The long term objective of the FAO MedSudMed and Adriamed Projects was "to establish and implement in each participating country and/or at multilateral level improved management plans for relevant specific fisheries, through coordinated scientific investigations and data gathering, as well as through joint multidisciplinary analysis". This implies in particular to increase the scientific knowledge on fisheries and their ecosystems for the implementation of the EAF at sub-regional level through research activities conducted cooperatively between the participating countries.

23. This objective was pursued in synergy between the two projects and with the FAO sub-regional project CopeMed operating in the western area of the Mediterranean, which focused mostly on supporting actual fisheries management.

### **3 Concept and relevance**

#### **3.1 Project design**

24. The objectives of the Projects were based on the identification of priority research topics and training requirements according to the requirements of the National Fisheries Departments in the case of AdriaMed, or the National Research Institutions in the case of MedSudMed, and of the GFCM to fill some gaps in scientific knowledge, to achieve a homogeneous level of research, to undertake ecosystem-oriented activities and to set up common fisheries management tools at sub regional level for shared stocks. The projects activities were organized on the basis of on-going national programmes, taking advantage of existing national activities and supporting data collection in areas that were not covered by the national surveys.

25. The Project embodied a strategy of fostering collaboration among scientific institutions in a defined region, with the hope of raising awareness among governments of participating countries on the need to harmonise the respective policies on fisheries monitoring and management. The implicit assumption was that by jointly developing capacities of scientists, eventually trust and collaboration would develop among respected institutions at national level that would with time lead to shared resources management. In themselves, the Project anticipated the more ambitious vision of evolution towards some form of integration of the political and socio-economic spheres.

26. The organization of Expert Consultations involving national experts from the projects areas was the starting point in the creation of sub-regional scientific networks and constituted also the initial step towards the sharing of available scientific knowledge on fisheries in the Projects areas. At the time of the Evaluation it can be said that the projects strategies have been consistent with the expressed requirements of the participating countries: by organizing ad hoc training courses and allowing the national scientists to actively participate in the GFCM SAC working groups and Sub Committees annual meetings they permitted an upgrading of the national experts on specific issues; allowing the scientific institutions involved in the projects to share information between themselves and to benefit from assistance of international experts resulted in innovative research activities which main outputs respond to the national and international objectives in the field of fisheries management.

#### **3.2 Relevance**

27. The projects are highly relevant for the development of priorities and needs of the regions, where the multi-specific fishing activity, as well as the movements of the different stocks across fishing grounds of the countries highlight the need for a close inter-country collaboration, to ensure adequate monitoring and analysis of the status of many shared stocks. This has been recognized as the only way to formulate appropriate measures for the management of fishery resources in the area.

28. In the Adriatic Sea many species migrate through national waters of different countries during their life cycle and are shared between the fisheries of several countries. Fishing, and other uses of the sea, is an important part of the economy and culture of the

countries bordering the Adriatic, but maintaining this requires an important effort for achieving a sustainable fisheries management framework that will have to be cooperative among the different countries, if it is going to be successful.

In the area covered by the MedSudmed Project several fish stocks appear to be under significant fishing pressure, so the objective of the project was to enable the fisheries institutions of the participating governments to carry out continuous dynamic assessment and monitoring of the status of the stocks of fish plus other living resources, as well as the ecosystems, so as to provide ongoing advice for appropriate rapid adjustments in their national and regional mechanisms for management of the fisheries, and so maintain fish production at an optimum level.

29. The relevance of the projects has been highly reinforced by the fact that soon after they started, the modus operandi of the GFCM changed and the Commission was empowered to adopt management decisions whose introduction in the national legislations and implementation is binding for the member countries.

## **4 Implementation**

### **4.1 Budget and expenditure**

30. Boxes 1 and 2 below synthesise the basic information on each project starting date, planned completion date and cumulative budgets at the time of the Evaluation

#### **Box 1. AdriaMed projects**

<b>AdriaMed, GCP/RER/010/ITA</b>	
<b>EOD</b>	15 October 1999
<b>NTE (current)</b>	30 June 2012*
<b>First phase</b>	1999-2006
<b>Second phase</b>	Project extension 2006-2007
<b>Third phase</b>	Project extension 2007-30 June 2010
<b>Fourth phase</b>	Project extension 1 July 2010-30 June 2012
<b>Donor</b>	Italy, MIPAAF
<b>Budget USD</b>	8,087,157
<b>EC project – GCP /RER/021/EC</b>	
<b>EOD</b>	15 April 2011
<b>NTE (current)</b>	14 April 2012
<b>Donor</b>	European Union
<b>Budget USD</b>	341,296

(\*). Further extension announced: NTE 31 DEC 2012 with possibility of a yet further extension NTE 30 JUN 2013

#### **Box 2. MedSudMed projects**

<b>MedSudMed, GCP/RER/010/ITA (Module 2)</b>	
<b>EOD</b>	1 April 2001
<b>NTE (current)</b>	30 June 2012*
<b>First phase</b>	2001-2005
<b>Second phase</b>	Project extension 1 January 2006- 30 June 2012
<b>Donor</b>	Italy, MIPAAF
<b>Budget USD</b>	5,400,502
<b>Sicily regional – GDGP /INT/010/ITA</b>	

<b>EOD</b>	1 April 2001
<b>NTE (current)</b>	30 September 2012
<b>Donor</b>	Regione Siciliana
<b>Budget USD</b>	261,780

(\*) Further extension announced: NTE 31 DEC 2012 with possibility of a yet further extension NTE 30 JUN 2013

31. Boxes 3 and 4 below illustrate the respective rates of delivery

**Box 3. ADRIAMED projects, Delivery vs. total budget (PROJECT EOD to 2011)**

Project	Total Budget (EOD-NTE)	Total Expenditure (EOD to 2011 incl.)	Overall Rate of Delivery (EOD to 2011)
<i>AdriaMed</i>	8,087,157	7,610,961	94,11%
<i>EC project</i>	341,296	149,372	43,77%

**Box 4. MEDSUDMED projects, Delivery vs. total budget (PROJECT EOD to 2011)**

Project	Total Budget (EOD-NTE)	Total Expenditure (EOD to 2011 incl.)	Overall Rate of Delivery (EOD to 2011)
<i>MedSudMed</i>	5,400,502	4,976,387	92,15%
<i>Sicily Regional</i>	261,780	106,269	40,59%

32. The rates of delivery for the 2008-2011 period examined by the evaluation, show a constant and well monitored fund disbursement pattern, fully reflecting the events of the projects and the action of the Project Coordinators to cope with success with problems stemming from the progressive growth of the project.

33. AdriaMed and MedSudMed project funding agreements drove the donor contribution in the ProDocs covering the first phase of the projects. Subsequent project extensions, out of a compelling donor requirement, had to reflect a new contribution structure in view of the different cost-centre imputed. MIPAAF contributions were incorporated in a pay-per-service structure, entailing execution of activities before receiving funds.<sup>2</sup> The MOU instrument was adopted to formalise the new arrangement and this structure implied, per se, recourse to advance funding.

34. Another change occurred in late 2006, generated by the adoption by the Italian Ministry of Treasury and Finance of the principles of 'perenzione' entailing the re-appropriation by the State Treasury of any unspent portion of funds previously allotted to Ministries. Earmarked and committed, but unspent MIPAAF funds became suddenly unavailable, creating problems in running project operations in 2007/2008, causing temporary use of cash advance and, ultimately, a net reduction of projects budget. Thus, the overall projects' financial resources were reduced through two budget revisions.<sup>3</sup>

35. To counteract the temporary fund shortages avoiding the inevitable halt to activities, the project had to run in deficit and is now called upon to pay the related interest bank charges. The Evaluation considers that FAO should take stock of this experience, with the

<sup>2</sup> This situation was facilitated by a 50%-45%-5% installment sequence, for which MIPAAF has to be commended

<sup>3</sup> Revision QQQ for ADRIAMED and MMM for MEDSUDMED

object of formulating a realistic policy and implementing solutions alternative to the interruption of project activities or relying on personal assumption of responsibility by a Budget Holder. Lastly, the financial implications related to belated payment of donor contribution should be more carefully examined since the formulation of project documents or extension and more actively followed during the project life cycle. A risk analysis would also be useful in appraising situation and potential future instances.

36. All Budget Revisions stemmed from the Coordinating Committee and the Evaluation found them to be coherent with the project principles and objectives, including operational aspects. Overall, BRs allowed the project to steer its implementation according to its goals, despite the budget cuts.

37. In conclusion, with the possible exception of the initial phase,<sup>4</sup> mainly devoted to shaping up the network in a difficult context, the projects became fully operational marking a high level of efficiency in producing scientific outputs through full participatory approach among network institutions.

## **4.2 Projects management**

### **4.2.1 Institutional set-up**

38. The projects have been run under the overall responsibility of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, Marine and Inland Fisheries Group (FIRF) within the Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division (FIR).

39. FIRF is institutionally responsible, however its 'emprise' is not 'visible' ; in fact the highest level of project-related responsibility was embodied by the Coordinating Committee (one for each project). The Committee incorporates three components: FAO, Resource and Project Partners and is chaired by a Senior Representative of the Hosting Country. Decisions are taken through partners' consensus and provide guidance for implementation of Annual Workplan by the Project CTA and Management Unit. The CC is composed by

- FAO FIRF Lead Technical Unit;
- ADRIAMED-MEDSUDMED Project Management CTA and Unit Staff;
- A representative for each country of the Scientific Institution involved in the project network;
- A representative for each country of the Government Entity responsible for the Scientific Institution;
- CTAs of the COPEMED and EASTMED projects;
- Representative of GFCM;
- Senior Representatives of Donors, or their Delegates;
- Representatives of Scientific Institution(s) of Donor Country(ies).

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<sup>4</sup> Approximately the first two years following project EOD: 1999-2001 for ADRIAMED and 2001-2004 for MEDSUDMED



40. The role of Lead Technical Officer had been recently assigned to a Senior FIRF Officer, who was entrusted with responsibility of leading, monitoring and coordinating all the projects in the Mediterranean basin. The LTO is expected to coordinate the Task Force, mostly comprising of staff from the FI department. The previous incumbent had carried out capacity development activities in a number of meetings, which were well appreciated by participants. The Evaluation noted that despite the length of the projects, and their 'programmatic' features, FIRF did not take any strategic or operational step to integrate the experienced developed by the projects in its plan of work for the sub-regions at any point in time.

41. Budget Holder responsibility was assigned to a Senior FIRF Technical Officer. The Budget Holder is responsible for the projects' delivery and progress in accordance with the work plan and accountable for the financial resources of the projects. However, functions performed were limited to the approval of financial documents reflecting actions in which the Officer had no participation and consequently insufficient background information. The designation of the Budget Holder, being in itself a management decision by FI/FIR, appeared to be based on hierarchical considerations, not on the principle of best-placed knowledge-cum-responsibility. Further, the absence of an alternate Budget Holder, as observed in FPMIS records, was considered detrimental to the overall projects management.

42. The Operations Group comprised a Project Operations Officer and one Assistant. Though formally the focal point and responsible for standard project operation functions, the Evaluation observed that the Unit tended to go beyond its mandate and take over responsibilities such as contacts with donors and other project partners, which would normally be considered an LTO, or even higher level's prerogative.

43. The Project Management Unit, responsible for the actual management of both projects is located in FAO HQ. It is headed by a Chief Technical Adviser/Project Coordinator, a FAO staff member himself, supported by a Fishery Monitoring Expert, a Fisheries Information Officer, an Assistant and a Secretary. De facto, the PMU had performed the vast majority of policy, strategy, technical and operational functions for the projects, besides acting as focal point for all external and internal stakeholders. The merging of project structures in one single PMU, occurred in the immediate pre-evaluation period, has positively contributed to efficient operations and cost effectiveness.

44. The real distribution of management and technical responsibility for the projects was not reflected in FAO's set-up: the CTA made decisions but did not possess any formal attribution of responsibility, including the power to approve the acts of management, for which he was factually responsible. The LTU, at the same time, had not provided the substantive guidance, nor fulfilled the formal role it was mandated to have. The absence of a FIRF representative at the 2012 Coordination Committee meetings is a clear sign of this absence. Overall, the Evaluation considered this distribution of roles and responsibilities inadequate and generating confusion due to overlapping of functions and formal attribution of responsibilities not coinciding with knowledge and performance.

#### *4.2.2 Implementation, work-plans and monitoring mechanisms*

45. Soon after their start back in early 2000, AdriaMed and MedSudMed were faced with a difficult environment experiencing rapid and radical mutations. Thus, the start-up of

the project's activities was not easy, in difficult political environments, characterized by major changes and strong conflicts of interests among and within countries. Notwithstanding difficulties, the scientific institutions soon established an effective cooperation, exchanging information and data, which were previously considered as country-strategic. This cooperation soon had the effect of 'dragging' the respective government structures, thereby planting the seed of resource sharing in a common interest area, and gradually moving from mistrust to cooperation.

46. As a result of positive achievements, at the end of the first phase (four/five-years resp.), an extension was decided in the 5<sup>th</sup> session of the Coordination Committee in November 2006. The projects were extended for a second four-year phase followed by yearly step-by-step extensions, initiating a series of committee-driven extensions under the maintained strong interest by the main donor, the Italian MIPAAF, and subsequently catalysing the interest of the EU and the region of Sicily through the input of two side-projects. Also, the recommendations and suggestions formulated by the Internal reviews undertaken during the projects life have been adopted and implemented.

47. Despite the weaknesses of the institutional set-up, in practice the projects have been well-managed and made progress by steering the increasing ambitions and achievements. This was possible through the following features:

- Full participatory approach among the active stakeholders of the projects;
- Network of collaborating scientific institutions animated by a spirit of open collaboration and mutual assistance;
- Personal acquaintance of scientists and technicians, beyond their present involvement with institutions;
- Participation of partner government entities in support of institutions and to principles of joint monitoring of common shared resources;
- Role, Efficiency and performance of the Project Management Unit, always close to the requests and expectations of participating countries.

48. The projects elaborated their annual work plans through a complex series of fully participatory exercises described in the scheme below, in which scientific and resource management issues were conveyed, discussed and matched with priorities and operational requirements. The elaborated work-plans were then approved by the Project Coordination at the annual meetings.

#### **Box 5. Formulation of work-plans**

- Workshops, training, research activities, technical assistance
- Indication of the GFCM, the SAC, the CAQ and Sub-Committees
- Indication provided by the countries in ad hoc meetings
- Indication provided by the Adriatic experts through the Working Groups
- Coordination Committee Meeting
- Workplan

*ADRIAMED document – Coordination Committee, Tirana, March 2012*

49. As to the Work-plan execution, the very nature of operations, the short-timed extensions, the issues of funds availability and their effect on the budget allocations did not always permit a 100% work-plan realism. Nevertheless, the 2012 Coordination Committee Meeting declared that the approximate percentage of achievement of the activities during the

last year was around 80-90%, which was considered a satisfactory result when dealing with complex scientific surveys within less than 9-10 months time to make them fit into a yearly work-plan.

50. In order to facilitate the direct and regular contact with participating countries each country appointed a focal point with a role/mandate to advise on specific project components at national level, ensures effective flow of communication to and from the national scientific counterparts and provides all the necessary support in information gathering and data collection.

51. The AdriaMed and MedSudMed annual Coordinating Committees played the leading role in discussing and prioritising activities, agreeing on annual work-plans, reviewing progress in their implementation, and undertaking comprehensive examination of the activities throughout the year. These meetings were an opportunity to get the appraisal from the countries, to assess and evaluate the work performed at national and regional level, to discuss and evaluate the results of the projects and to give clear direction to the projects' activities.

52. The work plan and future activities defined at each Coordination Committee Meeting were generally coherent with the work plan of the different Project components and with the expectations of the countries. The progress reports were regularly presented to the Donors, present also in the Coordinating Committees.

53. Reports on activity progress were also presented yearly to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) of the GFCM, listing the main outputs carried out by the projects and which could be considered relevant also for the Mediterranean area. Moreover, scientific presentations were made during the different GFCM subcommittee meetings and working groups of the SAC. These presentations have been a relevant aspect for the Projects, in particular concerning the strengthening of cooperation between the Projects and the Mediterranean fisheries science community and also in supporting the GFCM activities.

54. Over time, changes of project coordinators and in the location of the projects staffs have occurred, creating some logistical problems in terms of scientific coordination, preparation of documents, organisation of training courses etc. Furthermore the shortage of technical staff has been the subject of some delay with regard to the work related to Project communication (web site upgrading, finalization of publications) and data processing. However, thanks to the proactive action of the project's staff, its good relations with the scientists and then with the fisheries administrations; all the interviews demonstrate that this approach and modus-operandi have been highly successful as there is a general consensus to recognize that it was fundamental in creating a climate of confidence and a sense of common ownership of the projects that allow now the stakeholders to work in full participation and commitment.

55. It is clear that achieving sustainable development goals requires longer-term support, however operational and funding constraints made it necessary to design the projects for a duration of 3-4 years and request further extensions afterwards.

56. A weakness of the whole set of initiatives so far has been the absence of a strategy that would allow consolidating achievements and transforming them into a sustainable mechanism of scientific cooperation and joint assessments of shared fisheries resources. A

possible cause for this gap may be in the funding mechanism and the continuous extension of the projects which could have been addressed with a long-term programme since the inception. The initially scientific objective evolved into a scientific/policy/socio-economic network: this aspect was not properly monitored by FIRF, which did not anticipate an exit strategy with concerned parties (e.g. GFCM). This, despite the fact that all project partners/beneficiaries during the Coordinating Committee meetings, at least since 2009 onward, unanimously expressed their preoccupation and will that the network and common working mechanisms developed by the projects should be consolidated and strengthened.

57. In the opinion of the Evaluation, an ‘exit strategy’ is required through which FAO, should take on a leading role in formulating a consolidation phase that will set the basis for a long-term partnership with the institutions involved. This would allow ensuring the transmission of the project’s know-how, lessons learned, achievements and experience into a new long-term institutional arrangements. This is particularly important when a project generates a network that needs to be strengthened and become sustainable for the future. In this connection, the Evaluation recommends consideration of the elements detailed in the ‘outputs and outcomes’ section of this report, as ‘Milestones for the Future’ transmitted by the Coordinating Committee participants during the 2012 meetings.

#### *4.2.3 Technical and administrative backstopping*

58. The Fisheries Authorities in the Member Countries and the Technical Divisions in FAO Fisheries Department are responsible for the monitoring Projects’ activities and performance and providing the necessary backstopping. The GFCM Executive Secretary is also responsible for the follow up on activities directly related to the SAC Program of Work. All these stakeholders should normally have a direct role in the identification of the priorities and in reviewing projects’ progress, as well as in facilitating the implementation of activities at the national and sub-regional levels.

59. It appears that this was not always the case for FIRF. Interviews with stakeholders showed that the strict technical role the LTU exercised in the past was both positive and important, particularly following the transfer of both project HQs to Rome. On the other hand, it seems that not enough attention was given by the LTU to the underpinning institutional aspects. This attitude did not help towards the possible – and advisable – adoption of a ‘programme’ approach versus the ‘a sequence of projects’ approach adopted; at the same time, the risk of losing achievements due to lack of additional efforts was seemingly not visualised. The projects were perceived as limited events, both in time and importance. Weak leadership by FAO may have also caused an observed confusion on attribution of tasks in FIR; also major recent changes in FI – FIR chain management did not help in providing adequate strategic guidance.

60. The Evaluation also noted the poor maintenance of adequate information in FPMIS, which should be the responsibility of the Budget Holder. The system did not contain, at the time of the Evaluation, all essential documents of project history to reflect actions taken throughout the projects’ life. This was also considered an area where more clarity on roles and responsibilities would help and where immediate remedial action could be taken.

61. The Evaluation considers that FI as a whole has given so far insufficient consideration to the strategic role of the projects in the overall scenario of FAO’s

interventions in the region and sub-regions and their future evolution, as witnessed by the poor documentation on the nature and achievements of these important long-lived projects. The absence of an exit strategy goes along this line.

62. Last, the Evaluation noted that FAO lacked a risk analysis and adequate corporate remedial actions in the case of unforeseeable reductions in resource partners' contributions to agreed projects. Corporate instructions should envisage possible actions in these cases, from appropriateness of generating bank charges to stopping projects' activities.

#### *4.2.4 Governments' participation*

63. The counterparts in the participating countries are fully involved in the Projects activities through their staffs and have put the research institutions' premises and equipment at the disposal of the projects.

They also allowed participation of national scientists to bring some interesting preliminary data working papers and scientific contributes for the stock assessments of some demersal and small pelagic species to various GFCM working groups and workshops. It is expected that some consolidated advices on these resources will be presented soon during the next GFCM-SAC meetings and that these advices will be used by the national delegations of the participating countries to make some first proposals of management recommendations.

## **5 Results and contribution to stated objectives**

### *5.1 Outputs and outcomes*

64. From the beginning of the projects, participating countries did not share easily among themselves any national data regarding the exploitation of some shared marine resources in order to assess their stocks and produce common scientific advices and management recommendations. This kind of scientific cooperation in the two sub-regions tended to be occasional and usually at the bilateral level.

65. The strongest achievement of the Projects *AdriaMed* and *MedSudMed*, as reported by all representatives of participating countries and as illustrated in the technical documents, is the establishment of consistent scientific cooperation on fisheries science in the Projects areas. This required a long and complex process; which eventually led to a broad consensus and cooperation among countries, with the full involvement of research institutions in their entirety, and not just from single researchers. The Projects encouraged and continuously developed a "regional attitude" to face and solve common problems, overcoming the initial reservations. For the first time, surveys were organized with mixed teams of researchers from several countries on the same research vessel and every activity was followed up with on the job training. This permitted the creation of a strong relationship between the researchers and contributed to create a common work attitude.

66. At the time of the Evaluation, scientists from the participating countries and from different fisheries research institutions regularly met or contacted each other by phone calls or emails, discussed and agreed on methodologies to be applied, put scientific data coming

from different surveys (demersal and small pelagic fisheries resources) in common data bases, made joint analysis of the data and discussed the results together.

*Review of the AdriaMed activities in the period 2008-2011*

67. The AdriaMed Working Group on demersal resources and the Study Group for the application of bottom-trawl survey data to fish stock assessment in South Adriatic Sea focused on the appraisal and stock assessment of demersal stocks (mainly sole and hake) and on indicators and reference points which may be considered at the regional level in line with the EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive. In addition the project examined the results of demersal surveys in the Adriatic Sea, of the investigation in deep waters, of the monitoring system for the Montenegrin fisheries and the results of the SOLEMON Project (“Stock assessment of *Solea solea* in the northern and central Adriatic Sea and evaluation of the impact of the different fishing activities”).

68. Small pelagic stocks make up most of the landed catch from the Adriatic Sea: thanks to the availability of all the data communicated by the experts of the participating countries, the project is now able to produce robust stock assessments of small pelagic species, mainly anchovy and sardine in GSA 17 which are important for the local fisheries in the Adriatic Sea.

69. The Project continued to support the establishment of sub-regional fisheries monitoring system in order to promote the scientific cooperation in the area. ATrIS (AdriaMed Trawl Survey Information System), a software for managing and processing data sets from the trawl surveys, had been developed and was being used by 20 research institutes in the Adriatic and in the Mediterranean, after distribution to the MEDITS participants and SGMED experts for the estimation of biological indicators after a request from STECF European Commission Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries. A pilot study to implement a monitoring system for economic and social information in the Montenegrin fisheries sector, applying the GFCM Operational Unit (OU) concept was also developed in the context of the project. Montenegro and Albania further requested specific actions to be taken by the AdriaMed project in the aquaculture sector.

70. In the context of AdriaMed, the management of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit area started to be looked at. This area, accessible for the Italian and Croatian fishing fleets, is very important for the local trawling activity and is the main Adriatic nursery area for hake. The definition of a common management plan in order to apply common rules or at least harmonize the management and conservation measures taken by the interested countries was of primary importance. The entrusted work environment created by the AdriaMed between the participating countries allowed in the last few years the discussion of this sensitive argument in all details and it is hoped that very soon a common management plan for this area will be defined. A technical paper presented at the 13th Coordination Committee of AdriaMed in 2012, included further information for the elaboration of a management plan of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit area, namely: preliminary information on additional data from trawl survey in the Central Adriatic in summer 2011; suggestions regarding the mesh size to propose for bottom trawls; future effort restrictions and temporal closures; monitoring through biological surveys and socio-economic surveys to assess the impact of fishing activities and the consequence of fishing effort management options.

*Review of the MedSudMed activities in the period 2008-2011*

71. MedSudMed carried out a longer list of activities, described briefly here below:

- On demersal fisheries, an inter-calibration exercise at sea between the Tunisian and Italian Research vessels.
- In cooperation with the CopeMed II Project, an analysis of hake and related fisheries and the assessment of the shrimp stocks in the south-central Mediterranean, including economic parameters in the analysis. The results, including the management advice proposed, were presented at the FAO GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee - Working Group of Demersal Species in October 2011.
- Support to the identification of shared stocks of *Octopus vulgaris* in the south central-Mediterranean; it also organised with CopeMedII a joint meeting of the Sub-regional Working Group on Shared Demersal Fisheries Resources to identify possible joint activities and a workshop on “Fisheries and appraisal of *Coryphaena hippurus* in the south-central and western Mediterranean Sea” in July 2011.
- An ad hoc meeting on closed seasons for fisheries currently occurring at national level in the south-central Mediterranean was organized to discuss the case study of the Gulf of Gabès with a view to the future harmonization of these regulations in the MedSudMed Project area and at regional level.
- On small pelagic species, in the inter-session period, efforts were made in pursuing the improvement of expertise on small pelagic fisheries resources and harmonising methodologies for data collection at sea, standardisation of sampling and data processing procedures, and identification of population units for small pelagic in the Project area.
- Support for the drafting of a monitoring programme on *Posidonia oceanica* meadows along the Libyan coast

72. Management Partnerships involving the Industry Representatives, fishermen Associations and Government Representatives has been initiated in the two projects areas. At the time of the evaluation the projects have reached a new phase of cooperation which will lead to proposals of some important multinational recommendations. The MedSudMed meeting on closed season for fisheries recently held in Tunisia with the involvement of national administrations could be considered as an illustration of this evolution. During this meeting a pilot experiment was initiated for the harmonization of fishing closure in Libya, Tunisia, Malta and Italy and it was considered advisable that, taking advantage of this pilot action the initiative be expanded to the Mediterranean regional level, possibly through a GFCM decision. Another positive example of promoted international cooperation was the effort for the protection of Jabuka/ Pomo in the Central Adriatic Sea mentioned above.

73. The Evaluation had solid evidence that in the views of participants, AdriaMed played a strategic role by being the only project which brings together all the Adriatic riverine countries. This facilitated and strengthened the regional coordination and the implementation of joint activities, which resulted, inter alia, in joint data collection and finally joint appraisal of shared resources. Particular mention was also made of the effective establishment of regional cooperation among the research institutions and the fisheries administrations in the Adriatic which allowed for the improvement of fisheries management in the Project area.

74. The participants to the MedSudMed project highlighted its important role supporting joint work on shared stocks, such as stock boundary identification and assessment. They stated that this constitutes the necessary baseline for the final goal of formulating harmonized fisheries management strategies and emphasized the need to maintain these activities in order to fulfil the GFCM/SAC recommendations.

75. Overall, representatives of the participating countries have been consistent in their appreciation and analysis of the projects as follows:

- a. Unanimous consensus on the highly positive assessment of the projects and its achievements;
- b. Essentiality of the FAO role, to be preserved in the present and any future environment, as a guarantee of institutional presence, quality of technical support, inputs and capacity building, independent judgement, neutrality, honest broker;
- c. The development of a scientific/socio-political network was regarded as the fruit of common efforts and a top important asset to be preserved, along with its nature of sub-regional common-interest cluster.

76. The Evaluation also noted the expressed readiness to move forward, within the network framework, to form bilateral assistance in capacity building, technical training, etc., including eventual provision of financial support. These elements were also mentioned and raised as caveats in reaction to the hypothesis made by the Evaluation, of a possible future existence for the projects in a different context. Preservation of acquired assets, FAO's presence, network identity are considered a 'must'. Consolidation and long-term partnerships mean 'moving a structure', not 'handing over' results.

77. As to the main Donors, a general consensus was expressed on project policy, strategy, scientific orientation and achievements. However, and despite the continuing interest, the difficulty of further commitment and funds availability were emphasised.

## **5.2 Gender equality**

78. In the management of both projects, gender equality in staffing was pursued satisfactorily. At the level of participants in Coordination Committees, workshops and working groups, the gender balance was slightly only in favour of men with percentages 57% against 43% of women. The Evaluation acknowledged that decisions for selection of national focal points and the national delegates into project activities were made by the institutions in the participating countries.

79. At the same time, the Evaluation also acknowledges that so far, gender and social inclusion aspects have been of minor relevance in projects with scientific cooperation activities. Nevertheless, if future project activities would actually move into social and economic analysis linked to shared fisheries stock management, equality and equity issues from both gender and inclusion perspectives become highly relevant in socio-economic data analysis, access to resources and markets as well as value chains, among others.



### **5.3 Capacity Development**

80. The Projects supported several training initiatives aimed at building national expertise. The major topics of the training were data collection, echo-surveys and fish age determination. This component also helped to develop standardized methodologies for important research fields such as fisheries data collection, processing and compilation, fish age determination, fish population dynamics. All these training activities contributed also to facilitate the flow of knowledge among scientists from different area and experiences, helping to build trust among scientists belonging to different Institutes and between those scientists and the Project. Among others the following training events have been organized:

- Training Courses on macroscopic identification of sex maturity stages of fisheries resources focused on the macroscopic identification of sexual maturity stages of fisheries target species;
- Training course on age determination of cephalopods and crustaceans. This course provided an overview of the techniques used for the determination of age distributions for selected species of cephalopods and crustaceans, through the analysis of length frequency distributions;
- Training course on basic fishery biology techniques to provide an overview of the techniques used in laboratory for the identification of sex and maturity, the extraction and storage of otoliths and the preliminary processing of data;
- Training course for technical operators on marine biotoxins;
- Training course on processing of oceanographic data;
- Training course on processing of ichthyoplankton samples focused on the identification of the eggs and larvae of main target species, as well as on the techniques for the estimation and mapping of ichthyoplankton density;
- Training course on processing water samples for the analysis of nutrients and organic matters as indicators of water quality and trophic content;
- Training course on processing acoustic data related to zooplankton. including the basic techniques to process raw acoustic data and calculations to provide estimates of zooplankton biomass;
- Training course on bacteriological and virological investigations for controlling food safety of bivalve molluscs;
- Training course on the software “Echoview”, which is used to analyse acoustic data.

### **5.4 Impact and sustainability**

81. Sustainability is related to the nature of the Project’s activities and their achievements; surveys at sea, or training courses, for example, are directly related to the funds these activities can receive.

82. It appears that the AdriaMed and MedSudMed projects have satisfactorily achieved their main objectives at the institutional level, where attribution can be assessed with a reasonable degree of plausibility:

- i. The execution of ad hoc training courses led to upgrading of the national experts on specific issues.
- ii. The projects have developed international scientific cooperation among the participant countries and strengthened cooperation among the experts of different laboratories within the same institutions.
- iii. The knowledge on the fisheries resources bio-ecology and fisheries is increased.

- iv. Demersal and small pelagic fishery resources are now surveyed at regional level and it is possible now to make joint assessments of several stocks shared by several national fleets in the projects areas.
- v. The projects provided valuable scientific contributions to the GFCM/SAC activities in supporting and facilitating joint and common assessments of shared stocks, thus significantly contributing to the work of the Sub Committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA). Moreover the projects financially supported the participation of the scientists from the partner countries to the GFCM workshops and meetings.

83. Despite these positive achievements, further efforts are required to consolidate achievement on a number of aspects, namely: monitoring of shared stocks; running and updating of databases; updating of the Web site; collecting and processing information on socio economical issues on a regional basis; harmonization of the fisheries legislations and regulations to be carried out on a routine basis.

84. The improved scientific knowledge resulting from projects' activities, can be considered as an advantage gained, together with regional cooperation among participants and improved national capacity. These achievements have created a solid base for the prospects of sustainability.

85. Still, ensuring the preservation of the institutional memory of participating institutes and consolidating the institutional capacity within participating countries will be essential for the longer-term sustainability of the results achieved so far. For this to happen, a last effort appears critical towards widening the participation to a larger number of researchers in the process of planning activities.

## **6 Conclusions and recommendations**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

86. The projects have undertaken extensive work and valuable scientific contributions have been provided to the participating countries. The main and relevant scientific outputs produced by the projects were presented to the GFCM through its Scientific Advisory Committees as technical contributions, particularly in relation to shared stocks.

87. Regional scientific cooperation concerning fisheries science has been successfully established in the Projects areas; common methodologies were developed and implemented through organizing joint field training activities and surveys at sea; also, projects have succeeded in strengthening expertise at national levels and in tackling the main aspects of the planned technical work. There is now a very good level of spontaneous cooperation including not only the partner scientific institutions and government institutions, but also more and more fishers representatives and other stakeholders of the fishery sector.

88. MedSudMed interacts closely with Adriamed with support provided on administrative matters, information technology and Web-site building, as well as other technical issues. In addition several training activities were co-organized with AdriaMed like the training course on the use of Echoview software for acoustic data management. Several

experts of the MedSudMed Project's region participated in the AdriaMed training activities and vice versa. Synergy was also created with the FAO Regional Project CopeMed II "Coordination to Support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean" to optimize available the resources for the maximum benefit to the countries.

89. The Projects Management Unit has been highly effective, in steering decision-making through a full participatory approach and by adopting a strategy of gradual involvement of scientific, political and socio-economic entities through a process of identification, adoption of principles of common interest and use of shared resources. Not least, it showed an excellent capacity of interfacing with the radical political changes experienced by the participating countries.

90. In summary, correct orientations and good management led to two successful projects. Merit has to be ascribed to the AdriaMed and MedSudMed staff, as well as staff from national institutions who have been fully committed in the implementation and monitoring of the projects and became full partners.

91. The FI Department approach to the administration of the project has not been very efficient and effective in terms of ensuring smooth operations, feed-back loop between the projects and FI and FIRF broader work, compliance with rules and regulations. In particular, FIR/FIRF risks losing the opportunity to:

- a. appropriate the AdriaMed and MedSudMed experience as a possible model for a programme approach in the area of scientific cooperation on shared resources management; and
- b. ensure full sustainability of the results achieved so far by the absence of an adequate consolidation and long-term partnership development strategy.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

92. On the basis of the evidence and analysis above, the Evaluation formulates the following recommendations on operational aspects:

### **Recommendation 1: To FIRF on project management and administration**

FIRF should review and re-define areas and levels of responsibility including criteria of assignment of functions; rationalise overlapping and duplications of roles among the Lead Technical Unit, Operations and the Chief Technical Advisor.
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### **Recommendation 2: To FIRF on project management and administration**

FIRF should:
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) review attribution of Budget Holder Responsibility respecting the principle of best placed knowledge-cum responsibility; and</li><li>b) appoint the Alternate Budget Holder and document appointment accordingly</li></ol> |
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93. Additional recommendations can be formulated on substantive aspects of AdriaMed and MedSudMed future work. These tackle both strengthening work already ongoing as well as broadening more systematically their focus.

**Recommendation 3: To the projects, on strengthening research and networks**

The projects should strengthen the following areas of work:

- a) improve the development and diffusion of scientific publications on activities and researches carried out within the projects, contribute to international scientific literature;
- b) enhance focus on multidisciplinary research in support of fisheries management compatible with EAF, by supporting the organisation of joint cooperative research activities with common and standardised procedures and reinforcing the activities on training and human capacity development of staff of fisheries institutions;
- c) enhance the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), by strengthening the capacity of the national institutions in terms of both human resources and organization, as well as direct support to the consultation process necessary for achieving this goal.

**Recommendation 4: To the projects, on areas for further support**

The projects should include activities aimed at:

- a) increasing the understanding of the role of small-scale and recreational fisheries (including biological, technological, and socio-economic aspects) and reinforce the institutional capacity to address and manage also this component of the fisheries systems;
- b) strengthening the capacity to explicitly include the interactions between capture fisheries and aquaculture in the management process;
- c) reinforcing research and capacity development on the socio-economic component of fisheries, including ad hoc studies on consumer's expectations, marketing problems, eco-labelling and product certification.

94. AdriaMed and MedSudMed are on their way to reach soon the final goal of formulating harmonized fisheries management strategies for several important shared resources and to propose some important multinational recommendations aimed at their regional conservation to be proposed for adoption by the GFCM; so consolidating and strengthening the network of experts and the cooperation between the various stakeholders (scientists, administrations, fishermen) from the participating countries is highly advisable.

95. The original intent of establishing the sub-regional projects was to address directly the needs of the GFCM, as mentioned above. As confirmed by the recent Performance review of the GFCM, there is satisfactory recognition by the participating countries of the benefits from these projects and it is important to strengthen their linkages with GFCM priorities and processes. This could be achieved in particular by enhancing stronger concentration and focus on fewer priority objectives dealing with fisheries management.

96. An extension of the activities for a new phase of two to four years could be recommended but due to the current economic crisis undergone by the donor countries it seems improbable that the current way of functioning may continue. At the same time, participating countries have expressed the wish to see the projects continue, maintaining the sub regional working scale under a common interest structure. During the interviews it was underlined that this could be achieved by merging the donor contributions into a multi-donors project or program.

97. It also appeared important that AdriaMed and MedSudMed partners continue to benefit from the FAO labelling as all the persons met by the evaluation team underlined that

this would ensure and guarantee the continued credibility of the initiatives. In line with these wishes, a perspective for the continuation of the sub regional projects could be to develop synergies under the umbrella of the GFCM.

98. Furthermore, the next priority objective of the GFCM, confirmed during its last plenary session (Marrakesh, 14-19 may 2012), is to establish and implement management plans for relevant specific fisheries in each Mediterranean sub region. This objective perfectly coincides with the AdriaMed and MedSudMed long term objectives (see para 2-22).

99. The new GFCM Framework Programme (FWP) for 2013-2018 has been recently adopted; it aims at providing the Commission with a regional vision/scope and the necessary extra-budgetary funds to carry out those activities relating to fisheries and aquaculture to be identified together with GFCM member countries. The FWP is envisaged as a platform that will promote sustainable development and cooperation in the GFCM Area, including with FAO Regional Projects and with partner organizations; so it can be regarded as an opportunity to optimize the use of resources and to allow the FAO projects to continue providing technical assistance to GFCM Members and to contribute to a greater extent to the development and implementation of fisheries management recommendations by the Commission.

100. Also, during the 2012 GFCM plenary session, satisfaction was expressed for the launching of the FWP in support particularly of developing states and it was reported that some GFCM member countries are ready to participate in funding the FWP. It was also pointed out that due account of the results achieved by the FAO Regional Projects in relation to technical assistance and capacity building would be needed to better understand gaps and needs that have to be addressed through the FWP.

101. In the light of the above, the Evaluation recommends the following steps for ensuring the sustainability of efforts and achievements so far.

**Recommendation 5: To FI, the projects and GFCM**

All parties concerned, i.e. the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, GCP/RER/010/ITA and GFCM Secretariat, should develop by end of 2012 a road-map to be proposed to partners for discussion, endorsement and funding, that would allow the integration of AdriaMed and MedSudMed achievements within the 2013-2018 GFCM Framework Programme.



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the United  
Nations

## Office of Evaluation

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### **Evaluation of the FAO implemented projects in the Adriatic and Straits of Sicily: GCP/RER/010/ITA AdriaMed and MedSudMed; GCP/RER/021/EC and GDCP/INT/010/ITA**

*Annexes to the Evaluation report*

## **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

### **Office of Evaluation (OED)**

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## **Annex 1. Terms of Reference**

### **1 Background of the Initiatives**

1. The Adriatic Sea is a semi-enclosed basin and one of the largest areas of occurrence of shared stocks in the Mediterranean. Most of the pelagic and demersal fisheries resources in the basin migrate through national waters of different countries during their life cycle (e.g. juveniles that are recruited to the bottom in shallow coastal waters in the northern Adriatic, possibly move to deeper waters in the central and southern part of the basin and vice versa) and are shared between the fisheries of at least three countries. The Adriatic fishing fleets operate in national and international waters and the shared fisheries resources are exploited under different regimes in each country, while their transboundary nature justifies harmonised management approaches.

2. The Straits of Sicily is a large and dynamically active area connecting the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean Sea. In this area the fishing fleet of four countries (i.e. Italy, Libya, Malta and Tunisia) operate continuously through the year. The zone is one of the most important fishing spots in the Mediterranean, which may be explained by the transitional nature of this area, the spatial aspects of fishery target species ecology and the morphology of the bottom, combined with the hydrological configuration enhancing biological productivity.

3. Since 1999, within the framework of its agreement with the Government of Italy and upon request from the participating Governments through the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), FAO has collaborated with the riverine countries in the Adriatic Sea and in the Straits of Sicily, to improve the sustainable management of the shared fish stocks, by enhancing scientific collaboration and overall capacity on these themes.

4. During this period, a total of four projects have been funded from different partners. These are briefly described here below.

#### *AdriaMed Project - Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea - GCP/RER/010/ITA*

5. This initiative has been operational in its first phase since September 1999 till September 2005, financed by the Government of Italy through the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MIPAAF). The project was extended into its current second phase (AdriaMed II) for the period 2005-2012 with the Italian MIPAAF core funding and co-funding from the European Commission in the period from April 2007 to March 2008 and for 2010-2012. AdriaMed participating countries are the Republics of Albania, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia and Montenegro. Total funds allocated to this project amount to USD 8 millions.

6. Due to the transboundary nature of the marine resources and to the dynamics of the national fisheries, the Adriatic Sea is among the best areas in the Mediterranean in which to investigate and characterise the interactions between the environmental factors, fisheries and fisheries resources and the possible impact of climate on marine productivity. In the area, the spatial and temporal dynamics of fisheries resources is linked to the oceanographic and



bottom features, and the fishing fleets operate in national and international waters. The shared fisheries resources are exploited under different regimes in each country, while their transboundary nature justifies harmonised scientific and management approaches.

7. Achieving the optimal use of fisheries resources in this region requires an effective cooperative management framework based on accepted concepts like the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). However, the countries in the region require dedicated support to allow them to develop the capacity (human, institutional and knowledge base) for cooperating for effectively managing the fisheries resources in accordance with the EAF.

8. The development objective of the project at the time of approval was: “The long-term objective is that the participating countries should be able to establish and implement mechanisms for the formulation and implementation of up-dated management plans for each specific fishery, through coordinated scientific investigation and data-gathering as well as through joint and multi-disciplinary analysis, undertaken in partnership with the industry”. A detailed description of project components and achievements is in Annex 1 of this ToR.

9. The present phase of the project is highly relevant for the development priorities and needs of the region. The Adriatic Sea is one of the largest areas of occurrence of shared stocks in the Mediterranean, and many species migrate through national waters of different countries during their life cycle and are shared between the fisheries of at least three countries. Fishing, and other uses of the sea, is an important part of the economy and culture of the countries bordering the Adriatic, but maintaining this requires an important effort for achieving a sustainable fisheries management framework that will have to be cooperative among the different countries, if it is going to be successful.

*Scientific Cooperation to support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea- AdriaMed Phase II, GCP/RER/021/EC*

10. This EC contribution to the AdriaMed Project aims at building on the objectives and outputs of the first phase of the project, by consolidating and further developing the basis for establishing and implementing in each participating country and/or at multilateral level up-dated management plans for relevant specific fisheries, through coordinated scientific investigations and data-gathering, as well as through joint multidisciplinary analysis.

11. The project was funded for 12 months duration, with a budget of USD 340,000. Its activities are fully mainstreamed within the plan of work and institutional set-up of AdriaMed.

*MedSudMed Project - Assessment and monitoring of the fisheries resources and the ecosystems in the Straits of Sicily, GCP/RER/010/ITA*

12. This initiative has been operational in its first phase since April 2001 till September 2006, financed by the Government of Italy through the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MIPAAF). The project was then extended into its current second phase (MedSudMed II) for the period 2006-2012. Additional funds were secured to support the MedSudMed Project activities related to the crustacean resources through a contribution of

the Regione Siciliana (Italy) for the period May 2011-December 2012. Total funds allocated to this project amount to USD 5.4 millions.

13. Participating countries are Italy, Lybia, Malta and Tunisia. Main partners of the Project are Marine Biology Research Centre of Tajura, Lybia (MBRC); Institut National des Sciences et Technologies de la Mer, Tunisia (INSTM); Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation Department, Malta (MRRRA) and Istituto per lo studio dell'Ambiente Marino Costiero (IAMC-CNR), Italy.

14. The Project area includes 6 GFCM Geographical Sub Areas (GSA): GSA 12 (Northern Tunisia), GSA 13 (Gulf of Hammamet), GSA 14 (Gulf of Gabes), GSA 15 (Malta Island), GSA 16 (South of Sicily) and GSA 21 (Libya). This subdivision is presently considered a useful tool for assessment and management purposes. According to the latest data, several fish stocks appear to be under significant fishing pressure; a reduction of fishing effort and changing in fishing pattern was generally recommended in order to ensure recovery and/or sustainable exploitation of the resources.

15. Due to the transboundary nature of the marine resources and to the dynamics of the national fisheries, the south-central Mediterranean is among the best areas in the Mediterranean in which to investigate and characterise the interactions between the environmental factors, fisheries and fisheries resources and the possible impact of climate on marine productivity. In the area, the spatial and temporal dynamics of fisheries resources is linked to the oceanographic and bottom features, and the fishing fleets operate in national and international waters. The shared fisheries resources are exploited under different regimes in each country, while their transboundary nature justifies harmonised scientific and management approaches.

16. Achieving the optimal use of fisheries resources in this region requires an effective cooperative management framework based on accepted concepts like the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). However, the countries in the region require dedicated support to allow them to develop the capacity (human and institutional) for cooperating to effectively manage the fisheries resources in accordance with the EAF.

17. The objective of this project component at the time of approval was : “to enable the fisheries institutions of the participating governments, by mid 2004, to carry out continuous dynamic assessment and monitoring of the status of the stocks of fish plus other living resources, as well as the ecosystems of the Mediterranean, so as to provide ongoing advice for appropriate rapid adjustments in their national and regional mechanisms for management of the fisheries, and so maintain fish production at an optimum level”. A detailed description of project components and achievements is in Annex 1 of this ToR.

18. The project has been operational in its first phase from April 2001 until September 2006, financed by the Government of Italy through the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF). In 2005 an internal technical review of the Project was requested by the Coordination Committee. The Committee also gave indications of priority areas to be dealt with in future activities. The project was then extended into its current second phase (MedSudMed II) for the period 2006-2012. In 2009 another internal technical review given the achievements and positive results of the project and the repeated expressions

of support and interest of all participating countries recommended a further extension of its support to the project.

*The role of the crustaceans as fisheries resources in the south-central Mediterranean, GDCP/INT/010/ITA*

19. This project was funded by the Italian Regione Siciliana through the modality of decentralized cooperation, a relatively new form of partnership that allows sub national government institutions in developed countries supporting similar entities in developing countries in the framework of the national development plans of the country concerned.

20. The Project aims at strengthening MedSudMed's effectiveness on issues of great relevance in the south-central Mediterranean, like the execution of harmonised surveys at sea and the joint data analysis as baseline for the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF). The project was funded for 18 months duration, with a budget of USD 262,000. Its activities are fully mainstreamed within the plan of work and institutional set-up of MedSudMed.

## **2 Purpose of the Evaluation**

21. FAO Evaluation policy establishes that all projects with a budget above USD 4 million should be evaluated at least once in their lifetime. The two GCP/RER/010/ITA initiatives have been operational for more than a decade and over time, their respective budget size has reached the threshold. Hence, FAO Office of Evaluation, the Fisheries department and Project management have agreed in mid-2011 that a final evaluation in the first half of 2012 would contribute to take stock of achievements and challenges for both streams of work. The evaluation would also assess the work carried out through the two new projects, as they represent additional financial contributions to the same purpose.

22. The objective of the final evaluation is to provide accountability to the participating Member Countries, resource partners including the Italian MIPAAF, the European Commission and the Regione Siciliana, and FAO on the extent of Projects' results, including outputs, outcomes and impacts – actual and potential - to date.

23. The evaluation will also draw lessons and formulate recommendations for the potential future role and strategies of the Projects, aiming at enabling all key stakeholders to take decisions regarding the utilization of project results as well as on the design and implementation of similar projects in the future. Relevance of and perspectives for Projects' continuation will also be assessed.

24. Internal reviews requested by the Donor were undertaken in 2003, 2006 and 2009, the latter strongly focused on technical aspects. The Final Evaluation team will also assess to what extent the recommendations and suggestions formulated by these reviews were adopted and implemented.

### **3 Scope of the Evaluation**

25. The evaluation will assess the Projects from their beginning (1999) until current time (early 2012), with a particular focus since 2006, against the following criteria:

- a. Their relevance to participating countries' national priorities and regional priorities as agreed at the level of the GFCM; FAO Global Goals and Strategic Objectives/Core Functions; other interventions in the sub-region in support of the sustainable management of shared fisheries resources;
- b. Robustness and realism of the theory of change underpinning the Projects, including logic of causal relationship between inputs, activities, expected outputs, outcomes and impacts against the specific and development objectives and validity of indicators, assumptions and risks;<sup>1</sup>
- c. Quality and realism of the project design, including:
  - Duration;
  - Stakeholder and beneficiary identification.
  - Institutional set-up and management arrangements, including relations and lines of command with FAO Fisheries Department;
  - Approach and methodology.
- d. Financial resources management since 2006, including:
  - Adequacy of budget allocations to achieve outputs;
  - Coherence and soundness of Budget Revisions in matching implementation needs and project objectives;
  - Rates of delivery and budget balances at the time of the evaluation.
- e. Management and implementation:
  - Effectiveness of management, including quality and realism of work plans, throughout the life of the Projects and including factors affecting differential progress in implementation, if any;
  - Efficiency and effectiveness of operations management;
  - Gaps and delays if any between planned and achieved outputs, the causes and consequences of delays and assessment of any remedial measures taken;
  - Efficiency in producing outputs;
  - Effectiveness of internal monitoring and review processes;
  - Efficiency and effectiveness of the Coordination Committees, in particular in their yearly reviewing role and in providing guidance;
  - Quality and quantity of administrative and technical support by FAO to the Projects, including the Lead Technical Unit, the Budget Holder and Project Task Forces; and
  - Timeliness, quality and quantity of inputs and support by the Governments and resource partners.
- f. Extent to which the expected outputs have been produced, their quality and timeliness. The long life of the projects led to a high number of outputs, identified and implemented in the framework of different components. Main categories are

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<sup>1</sup> The causal relationship could be expressed in a logical framework matrix

listed below, for both AdriaMed and MedSudMed. A more detailed description of results and achievements for each project is to be found in Annexes II and III of this ToR.

### MedSudMed

- A) Cooperative research programmes on:
  - i. Demersal resources;
  - ii. Small pelagic;
  - iii. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and fisheries management;
  - iv. Fishery and Ecosystem Information System (FEIS)
- B) National capacity building and training: eleven training courses have been carried out on different topics and in different locations;
- C) Regional cooperation: this component included the support to the participation of regional experts in several workshops, meetings, seminars and conferences organized in the Mediterranean area, as well as cooperation with other projects operational in the region (see Annex 1). The evaluation will meet responsible staff and participants of the other partner organizations and programmes to assess their views of the results of the collaboration with MedSudMed.
- D) Project communication: the project has produced a Web site that contains several Technical Documents issued by the project itself; the evaluation team will revise a purposefully defined sample of the documents, to assess their technical quality and relevance; an assessment of the user-friendliness and clarity of the Web site will also be carried out.

### AdriaMed

- E) Strengthening of the sub-regional network by involving relevant institutions of the fisheries sector to follow up on aspects of scientific coordination and cooperation:
  - v. AdriaMed Information System;
  - vi. Technical support;
  - vii. Institutional capacity building;
- F) Supporting the establishment of a sub-regional fisheries monitoring system, based on standardized research methodologies:
  - viii. Monitoring and evaluation of small pelagic fisheries resources;
  - ix. Monitoring and evaluation of demersal fisheries resources;
  - x. Small-scale fisheries;
  - xi. Socio-economics.
- G) Identification of management schemes to be applied on a pilot scale in selected zones with the aim of strengthening the international and regional cooperation:
  - xii. Sensitive habitat (Pomo/Jabuka Pit) issue;
  - xiii. Operational unit issue;
  - xiv. Inter-regional cooperation;
  - xv. Cooperation and support to the activities of GFCM

- H) Supporting shared resource management decisions, including promotion of harmonized fisheries legislation:
- xvi. Fishery regulation;
  - xvii. Fishery management
  - xviii. Cooperation and support to the activities of GFCM;
- I) Supporting the development of responsible mariculture, in particular for the enhancement of positive interaction between fisheries and aquaculture:
- xix. Interactions between capture fisheries and aquaculture
- g. Extent to which the expected outcomes for both streams of work have been achieved: the evaluation will assess to what extent outputs have been taken up in participating countries and their actual use – or perspectives for mainstreaming them in national policies, strategies and plans of action. Common achievements were identified as follows:
- establishment of a reliable regional scientific cooperation and networking activity, connecting several scientific institutions and universities in the Projects' areas of intervention;
  - agreement on common approaches and methods for several fields of research;
  - enhancement of national capacity of participating countries in terms of skilled human resources;
  - contribution to the development of scientific knowledge on the main shared stocks and fisheries in the two sub-regions, including on the supporting ecosystems;
  - contribution to the cooperation among Mediterranean countries in the framework of the GFCM.
- h. Use made by the Projects of FAO's normative products, '*primus inter pares*' the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, its related instruments and Technical Guidelines, as well as the actual and potential contribution of AdriaMed and MedSudMed to the preparation of normative products, including technical guidelines, by the Fisheries Department. In this respect, particular attention will be devoted to the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), a fundamentally different way of conceptualizing fisheries, aquaculture and their management. Since 2003, COFI has a standing item on EAF, stemming from the Reykjavik Declaration on Marine Ecosystems. FI believes that its own vision of EAF fully embodies the mandate of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishery. Related questions will be:
- How compatible are the Projects with the EAF in conceptual terms?
  - How could the Projects further develop and implement EAF in their action?
  - What is the perspective for full mainstreaming of the EAF approach in the visions and strategies of participating countries for fisheries management?
- i. Assessment of gender mainstreaming in the Projects, in terms of extent to which gender balance in staff and gender equality aspects were taken into account in project management.

- j. The prospects for sustaining and up-scaling Projects' results by the beneficiaries and the host institutions after the termination of the initiative. The assessment of sustainability will include, as appropriate:
- Institutional, technical, economic and social sustainability of proposed technologies, innovations and/or processes;
  - Perspectives for institutional uptake and mainstreaming of the newly acquired capacities, or diffusion beyond the beneficiaries or the project/; in this respect, the evaluation will give particular attention to the collaboration between the project and GFCM;
  - Environmental sustainability: Projects' contribution to sustainable natural resource management, in terms of maintenance and/or regeneration of the natural resource base.
- k. In order to achieve sustainability of national capacity development at the individual and organizational level, a deep involvement and personal availability of the national staff, as well as a widening of the participation to a larger number of researchers in the process of planning the activities, were essential. In this respect:
- Did the projects give sufficient attention to the national/institutional capacity building dimension in its related work?
  - How do the research institutions involved regard the projects on this issue and what are their views for consolidating it?
- l. The breadth of scientific institutions at national level, with different roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Projects require strong efforts on coordination and development of partnerships. In this respect, key questions will be:
- Did the Projects develop effective and relevant partnerships at national and sub-regional level in support of the scientific cooperation with all relevant partners? If gaps exist or better balance is needed, which are these and how could new partnerships be forged?
  - Does the cooperation framework established by the Projects, and the relations established among the participating institutions from the different countries involved need to be reinforced? If so, how (e.g. human resources, institutional support)?
  - Is there any lesson to be learned from successful partnerships with other agencies/initiatives, that could be useful for other areas of work?
  - To further improve implementation at the sub-regional level, what more could the Projects do to support the process?
- m. Additional specific questions are as follows:
- If a next phase of the Projects will be recommended, how should this be integrated within FI structure and plans of work?
  - How can the Projects help keep the institutional framework build up high through the generational turnover?
  - What could the Projects do to efficiently accelerate the existing cooperation? What could be the appropriate incentives for its fostering?
  - Can lessons learned from 10 years of project implementation guide expectations of the potential pace of change in different countries?

- n. Overall performance of the Projects: extent to which they have attained, or are expected to attain, their specific objectives and FAO Organizational Result/s (impact), and thus contribute to the relevant Strategic Objectives and meet its Core Functions; this will also include the identification of actual and potential positive and negative impacts produced by the projects, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

26. Based on the above analysis, the evaluation will draw specific conclusions and formulate recommendations for any necessary further action by Government, FAO and/or other parties to ensure sustainable development, including any need for follow-up initiatives. The evaluation will draw attention to specific good practices and lessons of interest to other similar activities. Any proposal for further assistance should include specification of major objectives and outputs and indicative inputs required.

#### **4 Evaluation methodology**

27. The evaluation will adhere to the UNEG Norms & Standards<sup>2</sup>.

28. The evaluation will adopt a consultative and transparent approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. Triangulation of evidence and information gathered will underpin the validation of evidence collected and its analysis and will support conclusions and recommendations.

29. The evaluation will make use of the following tools:

- review of plans of work, Progress reports and technical documents, Back-to-Office Reports, etc,
- semi-structured interviews with key informants, stakeholders and participants, supported by check lists and/or interview protocols, in meetings and in two countries, one in each sub-region;
- participation as observers in the Projects' Coordinating Committees meetings;
- surveys and questionnaires: in consideration of the large number of participants to training and project events, the evaluation team may consider preparing a questionnaire to canvass participants' views about follow-up to the capacity development events as well as uptake and mainstreaming of project outputs;
- the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) framework for assessment of Projects' results, if appropriate<sup>3</sup>.

#### **5 Consultation process**

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards>

<sup>3</sup> SWOT is a widely used strategic planning tool, useful also in the assessment of development interventions, to canvass their strengths and weaknesses, as well as future perspectives. It is particularly used in focus groups, but it can be adapted to individual interviews as well.



30. The evaluation team will maintain close liaison with the following key stakeholders: the FAO Office of Evaluation, Projects Management and FAO Fisheries Department. Although the mission is free to discuss with the authorities concerned anything relevant to its assignment, it is not authorized to make any commitment on behalf of the Government, the donor or FAO.

31. The team will present its preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations to the key stakeholders, to obtain feedback from them. Modality for a debriefing at the end of the data-gathering phase will be discussed at the time of detailed planning of the evaluation team's plan of work.

32. The draft evaluation report will be circulated among key stakeholders for comment before finalisation; suggestions will be incorporated as deemed appropriate by the evaluation team.

## **6 The evaluation team**

33. The evaluation team will comprise the following skill mix:

- In-depth knowledge of Mediterranean fisheries issues and relevant institutions;
- In-depth knowledge of fisheries and stock assessment methods and techniques;
- Solid experience in international technical partnerships and collaborative initiatives;
- Solid experience in capacity development, at individual and organizational level;
- Experience in evaluation of development cooperation projects and programmes;
- In-depth knowledge of FAO's management procedures.

34. The evaluation team will tentatively be composed as follows:

- Team leader with solid experience in the management and evaluation of international technical partnerships and collaborative initiatives in the fisheries sector;
- Regional fisheries expert with experience in capacity development and research methods;
- Expert in FAO's management procedures, with solid experience in the evaluation of FAO's projects and programmes.

36. All team members will have a University Degree and a minimum of 20 years of professional experience, or equivalent level of competence, in their respective areas of specialization. Insofar as possible, all will be fluent in English. Individual Terms of reference will be developed referring to this ToR, upon recruitment of each team member

35. Mission members will have had no previous direct involvement in the formulation, implementation or backstopping of the Projects. All will sign the Declaration of Interest form of the FAO Office of Evaluation.

36. The Evaluation Team is responsible for conducting the evaluation and applying the methodology. All team members, including the Team Leader, will participate in briefing and

debriefing meetings, discussions, field visits, and will contribute to the evaluation with written inputs.

37. The Evaluation Team is fully responsible for its independent report which may not necessarily reflect the views of the Government or of FAO. An evaluation report is not subject to technical clearance by FAO although OED is responsible for ensuring conformity of the evaluation report with standards for project/programme evaluation in FAO.

## **7 The Evaluation Report**

38. The evaluation report will illustrate the evidence found that responds to the evaluation issues, questions and criteria listed in the ToR. It will include an executive summary. Supporting data and analysis should be annexed to the report when considered important to complement the main report.

39. Recommendations will be addressed to the different stakeholders and prioritized: they will be evidence-based, relevant, focused, clearly formulated and actionable.

40. The evaluation team will agree on the outline of the report early in the evaluation process, based on the template provided in Annex I of this ToR. The report will be prepared in English with numbered paragraphs. Translations in other languages of the Organization, if required, will be FAO's responsibility.

41. The Team Leader bears responsibility for submitting the final draft report to OED and FAO, integrate comments and suggestions as appropriate and finalize it. The Time table in Section 8 of this ToR indicates the time allocation and deadlines for each step.

42. Annexes to the evaluation report will include, though not limited to, the following as relevant:

- Terms of reference for the evaluation;
- Profile of team members;
- List of documents reviewed;
- List of institutions and stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team;
- List of project outputs;
- Evaluation tools

## **8 Evaluation timetable**

43. The time-table below applies to the whole evaluation process. Number of days allocated to team members will vary according to responsibility

### **Box 1. Evaluation time table**

Activity	Date	No. of days	Cumulative total days
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<b>Finalization of TOR (including country and donor consultations)</b>	End January 2012		
<b>Finalization of team composition</b>	Early February 2012		
<b>Background reading (home base)</b>		2	2
<b>Travel</b>	5 March	1	3
<b>Briefing – information gathering in FAO HQ</b>	6-9 March	4	7
<b>Travel</b>	11 March	1	8
<b>Participation in MedSudMed Coordination Committee meeting and in-country meetings</b>	12-16 March	5	13
<b>Travel home station</b>	16 March		
<b>Travel</b>	25 March	1	14
<b>Participation in Adriamed Coordination Committee meeting and in-country meetings</b>	26-30 March 2012	5	19
<b>Travel home station</b>	30 March		
<b>Team wrap-up and debriefing in FAO HQ</b>	2-4 Mai 2012 (tentative)	3	22
<b>Travel (to and from HQ)</b>		1	23
<b>Report finalization and submission to OED (at home base)</b>	18 May (tentative)	6	29
<b>Comments by OED to Team Leader</b>	22 May (tentative)	Within 7 days; 1 day work	30
<b>Circulation of final draft to FAO stakeholders</b>	25 May (tentative)	2 days work, within 3 days	32
<b>FAO's comments to team on final draft</b>	8 June (tentative)	Within two weeks	
<b>Finalization of report by Team Leader</b>	13 June (tentative)	2 days within one week	34

## **Annex 2. Brief profile of team members**

Dr Henri Farrugio has been the Head of the French IFREMER Fishery laboratory for the Mediterranean (Sète, France), mainly involved in biology, population dynamics and assessment of demersal and pelagic fish stocks in the Mediterranean. From 2008 he is the Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

Dr. Argyris Kallianiotis, Ichthyologist, has a 30 years experience in the research of main fish stocks in the seas of Greek interest. Since 1995 is the director of Fisheries Research Institute a leading institution in Greece for fisheries research. He participated in many European and National research programs focused on management of demersal and small pelagic stocks, coastal fisheries and fishing technology. In the last five years he was involved as project coordinator or consultant in research programs and capacity building projects in East Mediterranean countries.

Mr Franco Franchini, Italian, worked for more than 30 years in FAO administration, finance and operations. He has been OED consultants for his area of expertise since 2007, as team member of the Honduras and India country evaluations and of the Evaluation of PCA-Norway. He carried out the analysis of the NEX modality in the India country evaluation.

### **Annex 3. List of documents reviewed**

#### List of MedsudMed Publications

Report of the Expert Consultation on the Spatial Distribution of Demersal Resources in the Straits of Sicily and the Influence of Environmental Factors and Fishery Characteristics. Gzira, Malta, 10–12 December 2002 MedSudMed Technical Documents No.2 Mazara del Vallo (Italy), May 2004 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-02

Report of the MedSudMed Expert Consultation on Marine Protected Areas and Fisheries Management Salammbô, Tunisia, 14-16 April 2003 MedSudMed Technical Documents No. 3 Rome (Italy), June 2007 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-03

Report of the Workshop on Standardization of Trawl Surveys Protocol in the MedSudMed Project Area Mazara del Vallo, Italy, 5-9 May 2003 MedSudMed Technical Documents No.4 Mazara del Vallo (Italy), December 2006 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-04

Report of the Expert Consultation on Small Pelagic Fishes: Stock Identification and Oceanographic Processes Influencing their Abundance and Distribution Salammbô, Tunisia, 1–3 October 2003 MedSudMed Technical Documents No.5 Mazara del Vallo (Italy), December 2004 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-05

Contribution to Guidelines for Age Determination of Chondrichthyes fish from the Mediterranean Sea (application to selected species) Report of the MedSudMed Training Course on Age Determination of Selacean Fish Mazara del Vallo, Italy, 22 November–01 December 2004 MedSudMed Technical Documents No.8 Mazara del Vallo (Italy), December 2006 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-08

Report of the Workshop on Standardization of Fish Age Determination Based on Otolith Samples in the MedSudMed Project Area Mazara del Vallo, Italy, 13 – 17 December 2004 MedSudMed Technical Documents No.9 Mazara del Vallo (Italy), April 2005 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-09

Pilot Study Spatial distribution of demersal fishery resources, environmental factors and fishing activities in GSA 15 (Malta Island) MedSudMed Technical Documents No.13 Rome (Italy), June 2008 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-13

Sea temperature, salinity and total velocity climatological fields for the south–central Mediterranean Sea MedSudMed Technical Documents No. 14 Rome (Italy), June 2010 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-14

Synthesis of information on some target species in the MedSudMed Project area (central Mediterranean) MedSudMed Technical Documents Rome (Italy), November 2008 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-15

Identification sheets of early life stages of bony fish (Western Libya, Summer 2006) MedSudMed Technical Documents Rome (Italy) December 2011 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD 18

Preliminary results on spatial distribution of abundance indices, nursery and spawning areas of *Merluccius merluccius* and *Mullus barbatus* in the central Mediterranean MedSudMed Technical Documents Rome (Italy), November 2008 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD 19

Field manual on macroscopic identification of maturity stages for the Mediterranean fishery resources. MedSudMed Technical Documents Rome (Italy) December 2008 GCP/RER/010/ITA/MSM-TD-21

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#### **Annex 4. List of people and institutions met by the Evaluation**

Arneri Enrico: Project Coordinator FAO MedSudMed FAO - Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources  
Bahri Tarub: former officer of MedSudMed  
Bedin Luca: General Directorate of Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture PEMAC VI. Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies  
Bianchi Gabriella: FIRF, Service Coordinator, technical backstopping officer for the FAO Mediterranean Regional Projects  
Bonanno Angelo: Researcher IAMC – CNR, Italy  
Castelgrande Paola: Coordinator Decentralized Coopération Programme Resource Mobilization and Opérations Support Service, TCSR FAO -Technical Cooperation Department  
Ceriola Luca: Fishery Monitoring Expert FAO MedSudMed  
Çobani Mimoza: Ministry of EnvironmentForestry and Water Administration, Albania  
Conte Plinio: Chief of Units General Directorate of Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies, Rome, Italy  
Esarbot Nureddin M.: General Director Marine Biology Research Centre, Libia  
Fiorentino Fabio: MedSudMed National Focal Point, Italy  
Jarboui Othman : Researcher Institut National des Sciences et Technologies de la Mer, Tunisia  
Joksimovic Aleksandar: Director Institute of Marine Biology, Kotor, Montenegro  
Knittweis Leyla: Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, Malta  
Kolitari Jerina: Agricultural University of Tirana, Albania  
Kourkouliotis Kyriakos : Project Operations Officer. Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Division FAO - Fisheries and Aquaculture Department  
M'Rabet Ridha : Director Institut National des Sciences et Technologies de la Mer , Tunisia  
Mannini Piero: FAO RNE Senior Officer, former officer of AdriaMed  
Markovic Josip: Head of Marine Resources Management Division - Directorate of Fisheries Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, Zagreb, Croatia  
Massa Fabio: FAO GFCM Aquaculture Officer  
Milone Nicoletta: Fisheries Information Officer FAO MedSudMed  
Piccinetti Corrado: Laboratory of Marine Biology and Fisheries,University of Bologna,Fano,Italy  
Raïs Marina : Project Opérations Consultant. Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Division FAO - Fisheries and Aquaculture Department  
Riga Konstantina: Project Coordinator FAO EastMed  
Scalco Silvia: Directorate General for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs European Commission Brussels, Belgium  
Srdan Mugosa: DirectorMinistry of Agriculture and Rural Developmment , Podgorica, Montenegro  
Srou Abdellah: Executive Secretary of GFCM  
Svab Jernej: Hunting and Fisheries Division Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, Ljubljana, Slovenija  
Vrgoc Nedo: Senior Scientist Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries, Split, Croatia  
Wniss Zgozi Salem: Director of Fisheries Development. Directorate Marine Biology Research Centre, Libia

Ye Yimin: Senior Fishery Resources Officer. Fisheries Management and Conservation Service FAO -Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Division  
Zaremba Aleksander: FAO TCSR