

Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/2
on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom-set gillnet fisheries for turbot
and conservation of cetaceans in the Black Sea

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

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

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

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

RECOGNIZING that some fishing operations carried out in the Convention area can adversely affect marine mammals and there is a need to implement measures to mitigate these adverse effects;

RECOGNIZING that these fishing operations shall be consistent with the sustainable exploitation and conservation of the fish species targeted

AIMING to improve the knowledge about the impact that certain fisheries have on marine mammals

AIMING to reduce the incidental taking of marine mammals in certain fisheries

TAKING into account the SAC advice on the need to endorse measures for the reduction of the by-catch of marine mammals

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

PART I
Scope

1. Members and cooperating non-Members of GFCM shall adopt fisheries management measures in the Black Sea Region to ensure adequate conservation of turbot
2. Members and cooperating non-Members of GFCM shall adopt fisheries management measures to study, monitor, prevent, reduce and, to the extent possible, eliminate incidental taking of cetaceans during fishing operations.

PART II
Definitions

3. For the purposes of this Recommendation the following definitions shall apply:
 - "Black Sea" means the GFCM geographical sub-area n° 29 as defined in resolution GFCM/33/2009/2

- "Turbot" means fishes pertaining to the species *Psetta maxima*
- "Picked dogfish" means fishes pertaining to the species *Squalus acanthias*
- "Bottom-set gillnet" means any net made up of a single piece of net held vertically in the water by floats and weights fixed or capable of being fixed by any means to the bottom of the sea and maintain the gear in place either close to the bottom or floating in the water column.
- "Mesh size" means:
 - o For knotted netting: the longest distance between two opposite knots in the same mesh when fully extended (stretched mesh)
 - o For knotless netting: the inside distance between the opposite joints in the same mesh when fully extended (stretched mesh) along its longest possible axis

PART III

Fisheries management measures related to Turbot in the Black Sea

4. Members and cooperating non-Members of GFCM shall ensure that turbot in Black Sea waters is exclusively fished using bottom-set gillnets and that the following conditions are respected:

- Mesh size is greater or equal to 400 mm

The mesh size of the net shall be determined as the mean value of the series of 20 selected meshes; in case of different mesh sizes in the fishing net, the meshes shall be selected from the part of the fishing net having the smallest meshes.

Meshes shall be measured only when wet and unfrozen; meshes that have been broken or have been repaired shall not be included.

- Turbot with a size less than 45 cm measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail fin (Total length) shall not be caught

PART IV

Fisheries management measures for the mitigation of marine mammals' by-catch

5. In order to mitigate the impact of bottom-set gillnet fisheries on marine mammals' populations, Members and cooperating non-Members of GFCM shall ensure that monofilament or twine diameter shall not exceed 0.5 mm.

Monofilament or twines shall be assessed when unfrozen.

Monofilament of twines within a mesh that are broken or have been repaired shall not be selected

6. Members and cooperating non-Members of GFCM should set up adequate monitoring in order to collect reliable information on the impact that bottom-set gillnets targeting picked dogfish have on cetaceans' populations in the Black Sea.