



COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS

Intersessional Meetings of Aquaculture and Fisheries Subject Groups Joint Session

Eighth Meeting of the Aquaculture Subject Group (AS) Thirty meeting of the Fisheries Subject Group (FS)

28- 30 June 2023

Meeting place: Hybrid - NEAFC headquarters
London, United Kingdom/Zoom

Relevant activities carried out by GFCM during the intersessional period (July
2022-June 2023)

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General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)¹

- The FAO regional fisheries management organization for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, established in 1949 under the provisions of Article XIV of the FAO Constitution

OBJECTIVE	MEMBERSHIP	KEY FUNCTIONS
Federate efforts of countries towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources at all levels (biological, social, economic and environmental) • the sustainable development of aquaculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 Contracting Parties: 9 Mediterranean states, 3 Black Sea states, and European Union • 6 Cooperating non-Contracting Parties: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Jordan, Republic of Moldova, Saudi Arabia, and Ukraine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt binding Recommendations for fisheries and aquaculture governance; • Contribute to marine spatial planning and level playing field.

- Implement policy and activities through the Secretariat (based at its headquarters in Rome) and oversee a subregional approach to fisheries management through its technical units in the 5 GFCM subregions.

¹ <https://www.fao.org/gfcm/about/en/>



- In cooperation with other RFMOs, the GFCM plays a central part in coordinating governmental efforts to effectively manage fisheries at the regional level following the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) and in line with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). It also works closely with intergovernmental, non-governmental and civil society organizations. The GFCM both coordinates and benefits from the support of initiatives to enhance scientific cooperation and capacity-building among its contracting parties
- **GFCM 2030 Strategy** – Building together a new strategy for **Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture**. Its five targets are in alignment with blue transformation, a pillar of FAO's new Strategic Framework



1. GFCM - Fisheries

- Continuous improvement of the fisheries **Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF)**² of the GFCM as an instrument supporting the identification and timely collection of fisheries-related data by its contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) necessary to improve the formulation of sound scientific advice by relevant GFCM subsidiary bodies in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. 64 DCRF subtasks now implemented and the DCRF manual (including data fields definitions and codifications) kept updated in English and French.

² www.fao.org/gfcm/data/dcrf

- Progress on the implementation of **data quality standards**, including fisheries quality indicators on the DCRF online platform³, and related checks workflows to enhance the overall quality of fisheries data in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.
- Organization of a dedicated “*Workshop on data collection and submission and the management of compliance-related information, including a session on fishing capacity (WKDATA)*” (January 2023)⁴ towards the harmonization of fisheries data collection, transmission and then management at GFCM level.
- **Assessment** of more than 80 **stocks** (77 in the Mediterranean and 7 in the Black Sea in the period January - July 2022). Progress towards a modern dissemination via the GFCM website of **Stock Assessment Forms (SAFs)**⁵ as validated by the GFCM subsidiary bodies for relevant Mediterranean and Black Sea species. Progress on the development of the recent GFCM framework to organize **Stock Assessment Results (STAR)**⁶ which streamlines and automates the information flow from stock assessments to scientific advice, strengthens quality assurance and data dissemination.
- Analysis of progress in the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (**RPOA-SSF**) in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and the execution of an **SSF Forum** capacity building programme promoting peer-to-peer exchange among small-scale fishers across the region.
- Development of **protocols** (e.g. on discards, on incidental catch of vulnerable species, on scientific surveys at sea, on recreational fisheries, on marine mammals depredation) with the aim to provide a harmonized methodological framework for data collection and data reporting that is applicable to the context of different countries and enables the comparison and common analysis of data at the regional and subregional levels.
- Conducted **selected activities** at national and subregional level: demersal trawl surveys-at-sea, pelagic-acoustic surveys, beam trawl surveys, species-specific socio-economic surveys, pilot studies for recreational fisheries, discards monitoring programme, as well as specific actions (both monitoring and testing of mitigation measures) on the incidental catch of vulnerable species.
- Launching of the GFCM **Database on sensitive benthic habitats and species** (with currently 20000 records of VME indicator species and useful analysis tools – updated to January 2023).
- Publication of the fourth issue of *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries (SoMFi 2022)* in December 2022, together with the release of relevant SoMFi infographics on the GFCM website⁷.
- Finalization of a number of **GFCM publications**, covering mitigation measures, and non-indigenous species, and a catalogue of fishing gear in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region.
- Under release the **GFCM Capture Production 1970-2021**⁸ within the Regional Capture Statistical Collections of FAO in close collaboration with the FAO Statistics Team (NFISS) of Fisheries Division.
- Continuous enhancement of **data transparency** on the GFCM website⁹ through updated interactive dashboards for an advanced user experience to consult those public data that are gathered in accordance with relevant GFCM recommendations.

³ www.fao.org/gfcm/data/dcrf/platform

⁴ www.fao.org/gfcm/technical-meetings/detail/en/c/1640236

⁵ www.fao.org/gfcm/data/safs

⁶ www.fao.org/gfcm/data/star

⁷ www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi

⁸ www.fao.org/gfcm/data/capture-production, www.fao.org/fishery/en/collection/gfcm_capture

⁹ www.fao.org/gfcm/data/en/

2. GFCM - Aquaculture

- Improvement of the Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (**SIPAM**)¹⁰ in support of relevant GFCM activities through the provision of an exhaustive overview of aquaculture production in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.
- Ongoing work towards the modernization of the SIPAM platform to a) enhance **online submission procedures** of aquaculture information (production statistics, production centres, and market data) by CPCs through their National Focal Points (**NFPs**), officially appointed by their authorities, as an obligation in line with Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/1, b) deliver interactive data representation tools, to help users explore available data and gain useful insights on the trends of quantitative and qualitative data in the SIPAM database.
- Progress on the **quality assessment of aquaculture production statistics** (APS) towards the harmonization between FISHSTAT and SIPAM database for both volume and value records for human consumption. The SIPAM NFPs reviewed the time series and applied the changes directly in the SIPAM platform according to the discrepancies detected.
- Compilation of **socioeconomic data** including size of enterprises, employment and aquaculture contribution to the gross domestic production.
- Capacity-building and knowledge sharing promoted through Aquaculture Demonstrative Centres (ADCs).
- Continue supporting the implementation of allocated zones for aquaculture (AZA) within marine spatial planning (MSP) by defining specific road maps to improve data collection and the coordination between different stakeholders involved.
- Promotion of market-oriented production and social acceptability with a focus on market data.
- Environmental services of aquaculture highlighted.

¹⁰ www.fao.org/gfcm/activities/aquaculture/sipam