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GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN



Report of the thirty-ninth session

Milan, Italy, 25–29 May 2015

39

GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

REPORT OF THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

Milan, Italy, 25–29 May 2015

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is the final version of the report adopted in Milan at the thirty-ninth session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean on 29 May 2015.

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ABSTRACT

The thirty-ninth session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), including the sixth session of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF) and the ninth session of the Compliance Committee (CoC), was attended by representatives from 23 Contracting Parties, 3 non-Members as well as 7 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

In the context of the amendment process of the GFCM legal framework, the Commission examined and adopted by consensus its new rules of procedure and financial regulations, in line with the new GFCM Agreement entered into force on 20 May 2014.

During the session, the cooperating non-contracting party status was granted to Georgia and Ukraine in light of their increasing involvement in GFCM activities in the Black Sea. Moreover, in order to enhance cooperation with partner organizations, the Commission, based on a proposed set of objectives and activities, requested the GFCM Secretariat to finalize and sign, on behalf of GFCM/FAO, four new memoranda of understanding with MedPAN, ATLAFCO, OceanCare and EATIP.

A set of important measures for the management and conservation of fisheries resources in both the Mediterranean and the Black Sea were discussed and agreed upon. In particular, the Commission adopted four recommendations, namely: Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/1 *establishing further precautionary and emergency measures in 2016 for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GSA 17 and GSA 18)*; Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2 *on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan*; Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/3 *on the establishment of a set of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea* and Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/4 *on management measures for piked dogfish in the Black Sea*.

The session also provided an opportunity for GFCM Members to reaffirm their willingness to adopt measures to deter illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and to review the progress made in the implementation of the related roadmaps. In this respect, the Commission welcomed the initiative to proclaim, on 24 April, an international day for the fight against IUU fishing. Necessary actions in this respect should be explored.

In light of the growing importance of the aquaculture sector in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, and building upon the outcomes of the Regional Aquaculture Conference held in December 2014, the Commission established a task force in charge of developing a “strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture”.

Finally, the Commission adopted its programme of work for the next intersession and approved, for the first time, its triennial budget (firm for the first two years) amounting to US dollars 2 359 564 for 2015 and US dollars 2 479 727 for 2016. The current mandate of the GFCM Bureau as well as those of CoC, CAF and the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) were exceptionnally extended for a two-year term.

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OPENING AND ARRANGEMENTS OF THE SESSION

1. The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) held its thirty-ninth session as well as the sixth session of its Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF) and the ninth session of its Compliance Committee (CoC) in Milan, Italy, from 25 to 29 May 2015. The opening session was held at Expo 2015. It was attended by delegates and representatives from 23 Contracting parties, 3 non-Members (namely Georgia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine), 7 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), including its Legal Office and regional projects, the Bureaus of the Commission, Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ), CoC and CAF and the GFCM Secretariat. The list of delegates and observers is provided under Appendix 2.

2. The session was called to order by Mr Stefano Cataudella, Chairperson of the Commission, who thanked the government of Italy for hosting the session. He gave the floor to Mr Giuseppe Castiglione, Under-Secretary of State of the Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies (Mipaaf), who welcomed participants on behalf of the Italian Government, noting that holding the opening session at Expo 2015 was part of the strong commitment of his country towards sustainable fisheries.

3. Mr Árni M. Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General – FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, then addressed participants and welcomed them on behalf of the FAO Director-General, Mr José Graziano da Silva, acknowledging the important work achieved by the GFCM in light of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and of the FAO Blue Growth initiative.

4. Mr Karmenu Vella, European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, also addressed the Commission recalling the commitment of the European Union (EU) and its Member States and the need to join efforts to ensure a sustainable future for fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

5. Finally, the GFCM Chairperson recalled the progress made to modernize the Commission's legal and institutional framework to better meet current challenges in the region taking into account national and subregional needs.

6. The full text of opening speeches is provided in their original language in Appendix 4.

7. The Chairperson referred to the statement of competence and voting rights by the EU and its Members as provided in document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.2.

8. After presenting the agenda, which was adopted with amendments as attached in Appendix 1, Mr Abdellah Srouf, GFCM Executive Secretary, introduced delegations and observers and informed about the arrangements for the meeting. He then reported on the credentials received, noting that some credentials were not in line with the adopted standard format. In this respect, the Commission underlined that it was important to present credentials according to the agreed format.

9. The documents before the Commission are listed in Appendix 3.

AMENDMENT OF GFCM RULES OF PROCEDURE AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND ISSUES RELATING TO THE REORGANIZATION OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE COMMISSION

GFCM amendment process

10. The GFCM Secretariat gave an overview of the ongoing amendment process based on documents GFCM:XXXIX/2015/2 and GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.4, recalling the preliminary endorsement of revised draft rules of procedure and financial regulations at the intersessional meeting

of the Commission (FAO headquarters, January 2015) as well as the feedback on the reorganization of the subsidiary bodies provided by the SAC and CAQ at their respective sessions. The Commission was informed that the amended GFCM Agreement, following its entry into force, was being certified and published, in accordance with United Nations applicable rules.

11. The delegate of the EU informed the Commission that an internal ratification process of the amended GFCM Agreement was under way at the EU level. He clarified that this process would not undermine the functioning of the Commission.

12. In the ensuing discussions, it was noted that considerable progress had been made in the negotiations for the amendment of the GFCM rules of procedure and financial regulations. Several delegations commented on provisions in both texts and the GFCM Secretariat was invited to submit a revised version centered on the following pending matters:

Rules of procedure

13. Corrective measures: the rules of procedure should provide guidance on the specific measures that could be foreseen to resolve cases of non-compliance, in light of the practice adopted by other regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs). These measures, consistent with relevant RFMOs practice, should be listed.

14. Reorganization of the subsidiary bodies: it was noted that two different approaches were proposed for the CAQ and the SAC. In light of the proposed restructuring of the CAQ, this committee would continue to operate through working groups, with new principles and updated terms of reference and functions, in line with the priorities defined in the Aquaculture multistakeholder platform (AMShP). As for the SAC, the proposal entailed a shift from a thematic to a subregional approach which would have to build upon an appropriate geographical representation accounting for the specificities of the GFCM area.

15. The importance of the review panel was recognized as a tool to support the decision-making process. The delegate of Algeria stressed that the review panel composition should be balanced between technical and management profiles. Moreover, the Commission, when deciding on the operationalization of this mechanism, would have to determine its composition taking into account the need to have a balanced participation of the different subregions so that the different socioeconomic realities of GFCM Members would be adequately reflected in the decision-making process.

16. Following extensive discussions, and in light of the complexity of the task, the Commission proposed that a two-year feasibility study be carried out to test the implementation of the proposed reorganization of the SAC and CAQ. The GFCM Secretariat would present an interim report to the Commission at its fortieth session and a final report at its forty-first session. Based on this report, the Commission would take a decision on the reorganization.

Financial regulations

17. Payment of contributions: the Commission was in favour of the triennial budget, with the fixed budget for the first two years and a tentative budget for the third year, provided that the fiscal year for the payment of contributions remained annual.

18. Budgetary flexibility: the Commission would be authorized on an exceptional basis to make expenditures beyond the approved budget at a level of 2 percent, consistent with FAO Financial Regulations and due to unforeseen circumstances with limited impact. In this case, the Commission would be promptly informed so to authorize the expenditure and, if necessary, set a different percentage.

19. Arrears: the provision relating to the payment of penalties for arrears was deleted.

20. Participation fund: the participation fund was approved and the Commission decided that it would define procedures to manage it in due course together with eligibility criteria. It was agreed that the fund would be composed of: (i) a percentage of the autonomous budget (2.5 percent) adopted for the financial period by the Commission at its regular session; (ii) a minimum percentage of 2.5 percent of all voluntary contributions received from contracting parties, or any higher percentage set with the donor and (iii) any other voluntary contribution made with a view to replenishing the fund.
21. Annex: the catch component of the contribution would continue to be calculated applying a factor of four to the average of aquaculture and other captures values. The Commission requested the Secretariat to evaluate the financial implications of its reconsideration and to report to it at its fortieth session.
22. In the ensuing discussions, several views were exchanged on a number of issues. With reference to the possibility of including derogations as corrective measures, the delegate of the EU indicated that his organization, although willing to support a consensus, wanted to make it clear that derogations had to be regarded as a last resort and not as a convenient solution for Members. In this regard, he stressed the wording of Rule XIX, which addressed cases of prolonged and unjustified non-compliance, expressing hopes that no Member would find itself in such a situation.
23. As for the mandate of the CAQ, the delegates of Egypt and Tunisia indicated that the issues related to trade of farmed products had to be included in the mandate of the Committee.
24. In the context of the revision of the GFCM legal framework, the Executive Secretary firstly recalled that the amended GFCM Agreement had already entered into force. Subsequently, acknowledging that the necessary quorum was reached, he invited Members to adopt the revised Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations pursuant to Article 8(h) of the GFCM Agreement.
25. The Commission, having noted that no pending matters remained to be addressed, adopted by consensus the revised rules of procedure and financial regulations, which are reproduced in Appendixes 5 (1) and 5 (2) respectively.
26. The delegate of the EU and its Member States welcomed the adoption of the revised rules of procedure and financial regulations. He indicated that his delegation understood that these rules would become applicable as of the entry into force of the amended GFCM Agreement, in accordance with its statutes and, in respect of the EU and its Member States, upon their acceptance of the amended GFCM Agreement.
27. The delegate of Turkey also welcomed the adoption of the revised sets of rules of procedure and financial regulations and said that her country required internal procedures to ratify the amended GFCM Agreement.
28. The Secretariat would then perform a legal editing of the adopted rules to ensure formal consistency and make, where appropriate, the necessary revisions. Taking into consideration the requests by several delegations, this would include an appropriate review of the terminology used in order to ensure in particular full consistency with FAO financial regulations.

COOPERATION FRAMEWORK, INCLUDING WITH NON-CONTRACTING PARTIES AND PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

29. The Executive Secretary reported that the scope of GFCM cooperation was broadening as the Commission remained committed to enhancing coordination at different levels. He referred to: (i) the requests for cooperating non-contracting party status; (ii) the Concerted Action for Lebanon initiative; (iii) the increased involvement of GFCM in matters relating to the assessment of the status of marine environment and sustainable development and (iv) the memoranda of understanding (MoU).

30. The Commission expressed great satisfaction for the increased cooperation in the Black Sea and decided to grant cooperating status to Georgia and Ukraine, after considering their specific request. This reaffirmed the central role of the GFCM in the region. The Commission also expressed its desire that the cooperating status would represent a preliminary step toward full membership. To this end, it would pursue its efforts so that Georgia and Ukraine could be more involved in fisheries management and aquaculture in the Black Sea.

31. The Commission acknowledged the important work done with the Concerted Action for Lebanon initiative and reaffirmed its commitment to promote similar initiatives in other countries, upon their requests.

32. Given the key role of fisheries and aquaculture in matters relating to sustainable development and the assessment of the status of the marine environment, and recalling relevant international obligations, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to undertake any action promoting further collaboration with relevant partner organizations on these topics at the regional level, including the participation in relevant initiatives and meetings. From a sectoral point of view, the Commission stressed that the GFCM should play a decisive role in multidisciplinary initiatives related to fisheries.

33. The Commission reviewed progress with regard to the adopted MoU and underlined the importance of their continued implementation, thus optimizing resource use. Moreover, it instructed the GFCM Secretariat to finalize and sign MoU with MedPAN, ATLAFCO, OceanCare and EATIP during the intersession, consistent with approved areas of cooperation and FAO Rules.

NINTH SESSION OF THE COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Report on intersessional activities of the Compliance Committee

34. The ninth session of the CoC was called to order by its Chairperson, Mr Samir Majdalani, who highlighted the significant progress made by the Committee in recent years and its contribution to the Commission in support of the conservation and management of fisheries.

35. The Chairperson reported on the work carried out during the intersession, including meetings, on the basis of document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/5. He underscored the strong participation in all activities, which had enabled the Committee to collect expert inputs and make progress on complex and diverse issues such as the identification of cases of non-compliance, the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) and the implementation of a vessel monitoring system (VMS) and related control systems.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

36. The GFCM Secretariat indicated that steady progress was being made on the implementation of the GFCM roadmap to fight IUU fishing in the Black Sea and in the Mediterranean Sea, as described in document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.12 listing the recommendations of the Working Group on IUU fishing (Marrakech, April 2015).

37. The delegates of the EU, Monaco and Morocco, supported by other delegations, acknowledged the important work done by the Committee in the fight against IUU fishing. Reference was made to the transnational nature of this phenomenon, as recognized in different fora including the UN General Assembly, as well as to the need for a tailored analysis of the main constraints experienced in the different subregions.

38. The Committee recognized the need to undertake appropriate actions to deter IUU fishing and welcomed the initiative to proclaim an international day to celebrate the fight against IUU fishing on 24 April of each year. This celebration would raise awareness of the civil society and the general public on the main problems associated with this scourge. In this regard, the Secretariat was invited to explore ways to promote this initiative within the FAO and in close collaboration with other relevant organizations. At the same time, it agreed upon the establishment, on a permanent basis, of the Working Group on IUU fishing, according to the terms of reference provided in Appendix 11.

39. As the Commission had acknowledged the importance for Members to appoint focal points to the CoC in order to streamline liaison on matters relating to the work of the Committee, it was agreed that their main role would be to ensure coordination at the national level in connection with every issue relating to the work of the Committee. The terms of reference of the CoC focal points are reproduced in Appendix 11.

40. The Committee acknowledged the request made by several delegates, including those of Algeria, Libya and Tunisia, to promote training and vocational activities on matters relating to the fight against IUU fishing in their countries.

41. With regard to the need to assess the extent of IUU fishing in the GFCM area, the Committee suggested that the GFCM be involved in the ongoing FAO work on the establishment of a common methodology to assess IUU fishing. Moreover, the GFCM Secretariat was invited to work on a revised draft Recommendation GFCM/32/2008/1 on Port State Measures, in order to align it with the 2009 FAO Port State Measures Agreement. This could be done during the preparatory work for the revision of the GFCM Compendium. The revised recommendation would be submitted to the Commission for adoption.

42. In line with document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.16, the amended GFCM IUU list was endorsed and the GFCM Secretariat was instructed to publish it on its website.

Progress in the implementation of a vessel monitoring system and related control systems in the GFCM area

43. On the basis of document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.13 reporting on the Working Group on VMS (Marrakech, April 2015), the Secretariat reviewed progress in the implementation of Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 on the establishment of VMS and of Resolution GFCM/38/2014/1 on guidelines on VMS and related control systems. The suggestions made by this working group were examined.

44. In the ensuing discussions, the delegate of the EU recalled that Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 was in force and full implementation by the contracting parties had to be ensured.

45. The delegates of Algeria, Libya and Tunisia informed the Commission that significant efforts had been made to ensure the full implementation of the recommendation on VMS and requested technical assistance to fill those gaps existing at the national level. To this end, the delegate of Algeria sought the support of the GFCM to evaluate their national system and ascertain whether it was harmonized with other systems in place in the region.

46. The delegate of Morocco recalled that his country had been implementing VMS for several years adding that the system was fully functional thanks to the work of the national fishing monitoring

centre, which collected control data relayed by all vessels equipped with transponders. Efforts were ongoing to enhance the integration of data and reduce the costs of communications.

47. The delegate of Egypt stated that his country was committed to fully implement Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 and that a monitoring system covering 1 300 fishing vessels, including for security purposes, was due to be completed by the end of 2015, with a new legislation on VMS being enacted by Egypt.

48. With regard to the feasibility study on the possible set-up of a GFCM centralized system, as launched by the Committee at its eighth session, several delegations expressed satisfaction for the work done by the Secretariat. The need for additional technical requirements to support regional harmonization and data integration was acknowledged.

49. The delegates of Albania, Algeria, Egypt, the EU, Morocco and Tunisia were in favour of carrying on the feasibility study, including a regional survey involving the countries to evaluate the technical requirements of their national systems. On the other hand, they stressed that any decision on a possible GFCM centralized system should be taken by the Commission in due course, including on confidentiality related issues, based on the progress made in the implementation of the feasibility study.

50. The Committee recognized the need to provide contracting parties with technical assistance in connection with control matters. To this end, it was specified that formal letters detailing clear requests and providing indications of areas where technical assistance was needed should be sent by the concerned contracting parties to the GFCM Executive Secretary.

51. The delegate of the EU suggested that the Black Sea could be an interesting pilot area to test the feasibility study in due course. Similarly, the delegate of Albania proposed the Adriatic Sea as a pilot subregion.

52. As for small-scale fisheries, it was clarified that Resolution GFCM/38/2014/1 on guidelines on VMS and related control systems was not yet imposing obligations to control fishing vessels under 15 m. However, it encouraged the testing of alternative technologies, bearing in mind that control data also had an important scientific function to perform. These issues would be addressed at the Regional Conference “Building a future for sustainable small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea” (March 2016, Algeria).

53. The Committee acknowledged the progress made in the initial phase of the feasibility study and recalled that the next steps would focus on: (i) finalizing the virtual infrastructure in line with the outcomes of a regional survey on technical requirements; (ii) providing technical assistance to contracting parties - as requested - for their national systems and (iii) testing the feasibility study in relevant pilot areas, including the Black Sea and the Adriatic Sea, with a view to enhancing harmonization. The results would be discussed at the next meeting of the Working Group on VMS and related control systems, to be convened in 2017. The Commission would decide thereafter on the need for a GFCM centralized system.

Issues related to the Compendium of GFCM decisions

54. The GFCM Secretariat recalled that contracting parties had experienced problems in transposing GFCM decisions in the Compendium. Accordingly, a preliminary critical analysis was presented (document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.14), which included a proposed course of action for the revision of the Compendium, including issues relating to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) recommendations, along with a possible roadmap for the revision of the Compendium. The updated Compendium, which included GFCM decisions adopted in 2014, was also presented and endorsed.

55. Since the task of revising the Compendium required detailed and clear legal inputs, it was recommended to establish an ad hoc working group, according to the terms of reference reproduced in Appendix 11. To prepare the ground for the revision of the Compendium, preliminary work would be carried out by specialized legal experts in coordination with the GFCM Secretariat. The working group would also examine the finalization of the regional database of national legislations, currently being developed by the Secretariat.

Identification process relating to possible cases of non-compliance and status of implementation of GFCM decisions by Members

56. The Secretariat presented the conclusions of the intersessional meeting of the Committee on Compliance as outlined in document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.11 as well as the status of implementation of GFCM decisions adopted in 2013 and 2014 and of the submission of data expected in 2015, on the basis of document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.15.

57. With regard to letters of identification and concern sent to relevant contracting parties after the intersessional meeting, it was underlined that only some responses had been received, most of which after the deadline set by the Secretariat. From a general point of view, the main reasons for non-compliance were linked to heavy procedures in the transposition of GFCM decisions at the national level and to technical issues with data submission.

58. As for non-Members, the Committee acknowledged that a response had been received by the EU relating to Portugal, whereas no response had been received on the letter of clarification sent by the GFCM Secretariat to the United Kingdom relating to the case of Gibraltar. It also noted the information presented at the Working Group on IUU fishing regarding a vessel flying the flag of Belize that had entered a port which was not in the GFCM list of authorized ports and was subject to inspection.

59. The EU indicated that Portugal, being a Member State of the EU, was fully implementing GFCM decisions and expected to comply with relevant requirements thereunder. Information on Portugal should be presented to the CoC in a manner that reflected this situation with the aim to provide the Committee with the updated status of implementation of GFCM decisions, including in relation to data submission, for the EU and its relevant Member States.

60. The Secretariat would liaise with the FAO Legal Office and clarify how information relating to Portugal should be presented to the CoC in the future, given that Portugal was not a Member of the GFCM. An update in this regard would be provided at the intersessional meeting of the Committee.

61. A letter of concern would be sent to the United Kingdom for the case of Gibraltar together with a request for clarification to Belize.

62. In the ensuing discussions, it was proposed to carry out the work on identification during the intersession with a view to collecting additional information on the implementation of GFCM decisions and on data submission. The Secretariat would continue the consultations with the Members that received letters of identification, including identifying the main shortcomings hampering the full implementation of GFCM decisions, in order to present a case-by-case analysis to the Committee at its next intersessional meeting.

63. The mandate of the intersessional meeting of the CoC, as amended at its eighth session, was renewed. As it did not recommend any actions on cases of non-compliance already identified, it was decided that the Committee would address these cases, including the possible withdrawing of identification, at its intersessional meeting.

64. Moreover, the Committee decided to continue the clarification process during the intersession. As per the current practice, the GFCM Secretariat would send, during the intersession,

requests for clarification to all contracting parties regarding the status of implementation of GFCM decisions adopted in 2013 and the submission of data for 2015. At its next intersessional meeting, the Committee would also have the mandate to identify cases of non-compliance by contracting parties in light of the response received to requests for clarification.

Election of the CoC Bureau

65. The Executive Secretary recalled Rule VII of the rules of procedure whereby members of the Bureau could serve a two-year term, renewable once, and should be elected among delegates or alternates attending the session at which the election took place. He informed that the mandate of the CoC Bureau had expired.

66. The Committee warmly thanked the Chairperson and the two Vice-Chairpersons for their commitment and decisive contribution to the Committee over the last four years. In light of the remarkable work done by the current Bureau and given the important transitory phase experienced by the Commission, it was decided by consensus to extend, on an exceptional basis, the current mandate of the CoC Bureau for an additional two years and to submit the proposal to the Commission for endorsement.

67. The CoC Bureau, as extended and taking into consideration the need to replace the Second Vice-Chairperson, would be composed of Mr Samir Majdalani, from Lebanon, as Chairperson, Mr Josip Markovic, from Croatia, as First Vice-Chairperson, and Ms Nadia Bouhafis, from Algeria, as Second Vice-Chairperson.

MANAGEMENT OF MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE, INCLUDING REPORT ON INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Fisheries management and conservation advice

68. Regarding Mediterranean fisheries, Mr Othman Jarboui, SAC Chairperson, reported on the intersessional activities of his committee and related expert groups as well as on the main conclusions and advice emanating from the SAC and its subsidiary bodies, on the basis of documents GFCM:XXXIX/2015/3 and GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.7.

69. The Commission was informed about the advice emanating from the SAC in relation to various aspects, including: (i) measures to mitigate the state of small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea, hake (*Merluccius merluccius*; Linnaeus 1758) and deep water rose shrimp (*Parapeneus longirostris*; Lucas, 1846) in the Strait of Sicily, and more generally hake and shrimps stocks in the Mediterranean; (ii) measures to mitigate bycatch of vulnerable species and (iii) measures to protect nurseries of hake and deep water rose shrimp in the northern part of the Strait of Sicily.

70. The Commission thanked the SAC and its Chairperson as well as the GFCM Secretariat for the excellent work done and the efforts made in supporting the Committee. Moreover, the Commission welcomed the adoption of the Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF) as the proposed framework for the collection of fisheries related data in support of the advice of the SAC. In this respect, the Commission noted that the implementation of the DCRF would require modifications on existing recommendations, and therefore suggested that the Working Group of CoC on the GFCM Compendium could examine the issue and make proposals accordingly to the Commission at its next session.

71. In addition, the Commission was informed that acting on a request made at its thirty-eighth session and based on information previously submitted by Members, a biennial report on the status of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries had been prepared and should be published by the end of 2015.

72. Finally, in light of the important issues raised during the discussions, the Commission requested the SAC to address several important matters, including: (i) analysis of existing management measures for hake (*Merluccius merluccius*; Linnaeus, 1758) at the national level with the view to identifying the most efficient measures that could be applied at the regional level; (ii) better integration of socioeconomic and biological aspects in the assessment of the status of fisheries; (iii) analysis of stock boundaries, taking into account the information from a recent EU project (StockMED) as well as their implications for the future identification of possible shared stocks and areas where management plans could be developed at the regional level and (iv) quantitative assessment of the level of fishing mortality exerted by different fleet segments.

73. In relation with fisheries management in the Black Sea, Mr Simion Nicolaev, coordinator of the Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS), presented the activities of the working group and its expert groups as well as the related main conclusions and advice, on the basis of documents GFCM:XXXIX/2015/3, 4 and Inf.9. He highlighted that considerable progress had been made during the intersession to enhance regional cooperation on fisheries matters.

74. Mr Miguel Bernal, GFCM Secretariat, highlighted that the WGBS had provided elements to implement management measures for turbot (*Psetta maxima*; Linnaeus, 1758) and piked dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*; Linnaeus, 1758) and had urged the Commission to take corrective measures to mitigate the current situation of these stocks. In addition, the WGBS had recommended to advance towards the identification of management measures for the sustainability of anchovy fisheries in the area, and also requested the Commission to support the implementation of joint surveys at sea with a view to providing scientific information in support of management advice for the main commercial fisheries.

75. The Commission expressed its appreciation for the enhanced quality and scope of the work done by the WGBS and for the efforts made by the Secretariat, which had facilitated the increasing involvement of all Black Sea riparian countries in the work of the WGBS thus consolidating the role of the GFCM in the region.

76. In this respect, the delegate of Georgia thanked the Commission for granting his country the cooperating non-contracting party status and conveyed the strong commitment of his government to reinforce cooperation with the GFCM. He also requested technical assistance on issues relating to stock assessment, fisheries management and aquaculture development, in order to be in line with GFCM requirements and activities.

77. The delegate of Ukraine also expressed the satisfaction and support of his country to the work of the WGBS, including in relation to the fight against IUU fishing, the collection of fisheries data through the DCRF and the implementation of joint surveys at sea, and required technical support for selected activities.

78. The delegate of Turkey thanked the coordinator and the Secretariat as well as all riparian countries that had been actively involved in this work, highlighting that such cooperation had laid the ground to launch a discussion within the Commission on appropriate management measures for the Black Sea.

79. The Commission confirmed its availability to examine the requests from Georgia and Ukraine for technical assistance on issues related to stock assessment, fisheries management, and aquaculture development, subject to an official request made to the GFCM Secretariat describing the main areas for assistance.

80. The Commission endorsed the proposal of the WGBS to focus in particular, during the next intersession, on the implementation of a management plan for anchovy and expressed support to keep working towards joint surveys at sea in support of the advice on Black Sea fisheries management. Moreover, the Commission suggested to incorporate the identification of stock boundaries and the

fight against IUU fishing as main priorities for the region, and to adapt the work programme of the WGBS accordingly.

81. The delegate of Ukraine expressed the appreciation of his country for different proposals of recommendations tabled for the Black Sea. He added that some time would be needed to adapt to the measures included in those proposals, stressing the commitment of his country to ensure the sustainability of fisheries in the area.

82. In paying tribute to the positive cooperation between all Black Sea actors, the delegate of the EU suggested to adopt some flexibility in the achievement of management objectives for non-Members who were willing to cooperate. In this respect, he stressed that the work of the WGBS had provided great added value to the work of the Commission and boosted cooperation in the area. Moreover, he noted that the proposals tabled were largely based on the advice of the SAC and/or the WGBS.

83. After extensive discussions, including on the basis of pending decisions from the thirty-eighth session and the new proposals tabled by Members, subject to legal editing by the Secretariat, the Commission adopted, pursuant to Article 8(b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, the following decisions:

- ***Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/1 establishing further precautionary and emergency measures in 2016 for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GSA 17 and GSA 18) (Appendix 6)***
- ***Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2 on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan (Appendix 7)***
- ***Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/3 on the establishment of a set of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea (Appendix 8)***
- ***Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/4 on management measures for piked dogfish in the Black Sea (Appendix 9)***

84. The Commission expressed its satisfaction for the positive cooperation of all delegations, which had allowed to reach an agreement on the above recommendations, considered of paramount importance to advance towards sustainable fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

85. The delegates of Tunisia stressed the commitment of their country to enhance fisheries management, recalling that in addition to the adopted recommendation for the Strait of Sicily, the pending recommendation on the temporal closure of bottom trawling fisheries in the Gulf of Gabès (GSA 14) would provide further protection for demersal stocks considered by the SAC as being overexploited. The Commission acknowledged that the adopted recommendation on demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily could be considered as a first step towards sustainable fisheries in the area and could be completed with measures such as those proposed by Tunisia, once further analysis would be made by the SAC. The Commission therefore agreed to keep pending the proposal for the temporal closure in the Gulf of Gabès (as reproduced in Appendix 12) and to submit it to the consideration of the Commission at its fortieth session.

86. The delegate of Turkey stressed the need to ensure that adopted recommendations were compatible with previous ones, as well as with existing recommendations from other RFMOs operating in the area. The Commission concurred on the importance of harmonizing management measures so to ensure better efficiency. In this respect, dedicated actions such as the revision of the Compendium would be of great benefit.

87. In welcoming the adoption of the Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2, the representative of Oceana expressed hopes that, during the implementation of the tasks foreseen by this recommendation, the SAC would provide further advice regarding the identification of fisheries restricted areas for the protection of nursery and spawning grounds in the concerned area, to be submitted to the consideration of the Commission at its 2016 annual session.

88. Finally, the delegate of the EU stressed that the approved recommendations included clear indications to the SAC on a number of issues to be addressed during its next intersession, including the revision of stock assessment models, yearly advice on the status of stock and fisheries for which management measures are established, and assessment of the efficiency of adopted measures. In this respect, he urged the SAC to ensure that these aspects are taken into account within its work programme for the 2015–2016 intersession.

Aquaculture management advice

89. Mr François René, Chairperson of the CAQ, presented the activities carried out by the Committee during the intersessional period and the related achievements on the basis of documents GFCM:XXXIX/2015/4 and GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.8. These included the ninth session of the CAQ (Morocco, February 2015), the Regional Aquaculture Conference “Blue Growth in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: developing sustainable aquaculture for food security” (Italy, December 2014), Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture (SIPAM) activities as well as several other actions related to the work of the GFCM AMShP and the establishment of national mirror-platforms in Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria.

90. The Commission thanked the CAQ Chairperson and the GFCM Secretariat for the extensive efforts and quality work undertaken to support the sustainable development of a sector at a turning point. In welcoming the fruitful collaboration with relevant partners, in particular Eurofish, FAO GlobeFish and the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), the Commission commended the progress achieved regarding regional aquaculture indicators, allocated zones for aquaculture (AZA) and the elaboration of an environmental monitoring programme (EMP). The co-organization of a national aquaculture day, in cooperation with the National Agency for Aquaculture Development of Morocco (ANDA) and Infosamak, was regarded as a positive initiative.

91. The delegate of Algeria expressed the strong support of her country to the work implemented within the AMShP and informed the Commission about a meeting held in Algeria in May 2015, which gathered all AMShP actors and led to the formulation of several recommendations to support sustainable aquaculture development in the country.

92. Mr Fabio Massa, GFCM Secretariat, presented the main advice emanating from the CAQ and relating in particular to the conclusions of the Regional Aquaculture Conference, aquaculture data collection and statistics, site selection and carrying capacity, aquaculture sustainability and lagoon management.

93. The Commission agreed that the conclusions of the Regional Aquaculture Conference should be used to support the development of a strategy promoting sustainable aquaculture development in the region. Such development would take into account the focus given by the Conference on: (i) enabling good governance in aquaculture; (ii) promoting a healthy environment, a stronger aquaculture industry; (iii) boosting markets for aquaculture and (iv) advancing aquaculture innovations.

94. In this respect, the delegate of Italy reiterated the strong support of his country towards the effective implementation of the Conference recommendations stressing that this should be done based on a participatory approach. The representative of Eurofish also acknowledged the positive outcomes of the Conference, underlining that it had been a unique opportunity to pursue the positive

collaboration with the Commission and other partners, including with the Italian Government, and to enhance the visibility and regional dimension of the sector.

95. The Commission acknowledged the advice provided by the SAC related to: (i) the use of EMP for finfish cage farming and the related guidelines, in accordance with Resolution GFCM/36/2012/1 on guidelines on AZA and (ii) the use of selected regional indicators to monitor aquaculture development as indicated in document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.21. It also welcomed the *Guidelines for the sustainable management of coastal lagoons in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea*, formulated by the CAQ. Finally, the Commission underscored the necessity to include specific provisions related to aquaculture data access policies in Resolution GFCM/35/2011/2 on data confidentiality policy and procedures, inviting the Secretariat to submit a proposal to the consideration of the Commission at its next session.

96. In the ensuing discussions, the Commission recognized the growing importance of aquaculture in the region and expressed the urgent need to strengthen capacities in order to face challenges deriving from aquaculture development as well as to reinforce the Secretariat in order to better sustain such advances. The delegates of Albania, Egypt, the EU, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia reaffirmed their commitment to dedicate increased attention to the sector, reiterating their strong support to the Commission to foster an economically and ecologically viable aquaculture development, taking into consideration the different levels of development in each country and the need to account for national priorities. Along this line, the delegate of Algeria stressed the importance of sharing experiences and knowledge in the region, promoting synergies and interactions with activities carried out at the national level.

Regional projects

97. Mr Enrico Ameri, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division, illustrated the major activities and achievements during the intersession of the four FAO regional projects (AdriaMed, CopeMed, MedSudMed, EastMed) as well as of MedSea LME, on the basis of document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.22.

98. Several delegations, including Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Albania and the EU, expressed their strong support to the activities implemented within the regional projects as well as to the technical contribution provided at the national level. In particular, the support provided to the SAC was recognized as an asset in discussions on fisheries management. The Commission finally stressed that enhanced coordination and synergies between the projects and the GFCM, via its Scientific Committee, should be pursued in line with the new structure of its activities with the main priorities on the agenda.

99. The Commission finally expressed gratitude to the donors who allowed the FAO regional projects to carry out their work.

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD 2015–2016, INCLUDING POTENTIAL FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME (FWP) ACTIVITIES

100. The Commission was informed about the work programme of its subsidiary bodies for the next intersession, which was presented by the SAC, CAQ and CoC Chairpersons and the WGBS coordinator on the basis of documents GFCM:XXXIX/2015/3, 4, 5 and Inf.7, respectively. The work programmes were endorsed and the most salient activities were highlighted as follows.

SAC work programme

- Address the definition of stock boundaries as well as their implications for the future identification of possible shared stocks and areas where management plans could be developed at the regional level.
- Perform a quantitative assessment of the level of fishing mortality exerted by different fleet segments.
- Compile existing management measures for hake (*Merluccius merluccius*; Linnaeus, 1758) at the national level with a view to identifying the most efficient measures that could be applied at the regional level.
- Continue the work for the development of indicators on the good environmental status of exploited populations.
- Assess the socioeconomic impacts of potential management measures in selected fisheries, including small pelagic and demersal fisheries in the Adriatic Sea and demersal fisheries in the Strait of Sicily.
- Carry out a research programme on red coral (*Corallium rubrum*; Linnaeus, 1758) based on the concept note included in Appendix 10 of the report of the seventeenth session of the SAC.
- Carry out a reflection, supported if necessary by a dedicated expert meeting, on how to efficiently implement the subregional approach within the framework of the reorganization of the SAC.

101. The Commission expressed satisfaction for the work programme, which was regarded as coherent with requirements for fisheries management based on sound scientific advice.

102. The representative of the World Conservation Trust (IWMC) informed the Commission that a meeting to examine recent advances in the field of red coral management at the global level would be organized in Italy in autumn 2015, inviting Members to participate. Moreover, he recalled the progress made since the first research programme elaborated in 2010, stressing the importance of ensuring integrity and transparency in the funding mechanisms.

103. In reply to questions from the delegates of Morocco and the EU as well as from the representative of IWMC on the research programme on red coral, the Executive Secretary clarified that funding opportunities would be sought in order to carry out this important programme.

CAQ work programme

- Support the establishment of national and local mirror aquaculture multi-stakeholder platforms and/or equivalent committees/networks.
- Develop regional guidelines on the simplification of administrative procedures to streamline aquaculture authorization processes.
- Identify shellfish aquaculture priorities as well as specific indicators and their methodological sheets.
- Carry on the work on environmental quality standard (EQS) based on site specificities.
- Assess the feasibility of EMP implementation and its adaptation at the national level.
- Assess consumption habits with respect to aquaculture products in a joint research project between the GFCM and Infosamak.
- Carry out a regional questionnaire survey on national aquaculture multi-stakeholder platforms in the GFCM area.

- Gather and compile success stories at the regional level to improve the image and acceptability of aquaculture products.
- Carry out a regional analysis on the current practices for aquaculture marine spatial planning, in cooperation with FAO FIRA and within the activities of the AquaSpace project (EU Horizon 2020 initiative).

104. The delegate of Italy for the Presidency of the European Union recalled the positive outcomes of the Regional Aquaculture Conference and the important elements identified for a reference framework to promote sustainable aquaculture development in the region. In this respect, he prompted the Commission to establish a task force in charge of developing a “strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture”.

105. The Commission decided to carry out a reflection on its future strategy aiming at enhancing the role of the GFCM for the sustainable development of aquaculture in the region, within the framework of a dedicated task force to be established according to the mandate outlined in Appendix 10.

WGBS work programme

- Create a catalogue of fishing gear and vessel types used in the Black Sea, describing the importance of different gear types used by the fleets – to be reported in 2016–2017.
- Work towards joint surveys-at-sea for small pelagic and demersal stocks.
- Improve the estimation of IUU fishing in main commercial fisheries and incorporate it in stock assessment.
- Review available information on stock boundaries and stock dynamics for the main commercial species, including turbot (*Psetta maxima*; Linnaeus, 1758), red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*; Linnaeus, 1758) and anchovy (both *Engraulis encrasicolus ponticus*; Alexandrov, 1927 -and *E. encrasicolus maeoticus*; Fage, 1920).
- Contribute to the preparation of the regional guidelines for the simplification of administrative procedures related to the development of aquaculture infrastructures.
- Compile a list of success stories in the GFCM area on marketing and on the perception of aquaculture products.
- Conduct a census of Black Sea aquaculture activities (including infrastructures, species, etc.) in 2016–2017.

106. The Commission acknowledged that the increased activities of the WGBS reflected the growing importance of the group and expressed its satisfaction for the current work programme, which was expected to allow the Commission to be provided with quality advice on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture.

CoC work programme

- Progress in the VMS feasibility study.
- Develop a common methodology to assess IUU fishing.
- Revision of the Compendium of GFCM decisions, including recommendations on data reporting and information.
- Finalization of the regional database of national legislations.

107. The Commission agreed that the CoC, during the intersessional period, would focus its work on the revision of the Compendium as well as on adapting existing GFCM recommendations to the requirements of the DCRF. In particular, the standard format for the presentation of recommendations for fisheries management by Members, as well as the modus operandi for their submission and a panel review of the Compendium, should be also addressed.

Meetings planned for the intersessional period 2015–2016

108. The Commission approved the following meetings, some of which would be subject to the availability of funds. It took note of the kind offer by some Members to host different meetings of the subsidiary bodies, subject to confirmation by the competent authorities in their countries.

SAC MEETING	DATE	VENUE	FUNDING SOURCE*
Working Group on Stock Assessment of Demersal Species [5 days including sessions on data-limited stocks for red coral and elasmobranchs]	23–27 November 2015	GFCM HQ, Rome	(1)
Working Group on Stock Assessment of Small Pelagic Species [5 days including sessions on benchmark assessment for small pelagics in Adriatic Sea]			
EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM Working Group on Eels [8 days including one day back-to-back for the preparation of Mediterranean data]	24 Nov.– 2 Dec. 2015	Antalya, Turkey	(3)
Sessions of the SAC subcommittees / subregional committees (SRCs) [4 days]	1–5 February 2016	GFCM HQ, Rome	(1)
Workshop on the use of simulation and forecast bioeconomic models for the assessment of management measures [3 days] <i>Possibly back-to-back with subcommittees or SRCs</i>			(3)
Meeting of DCRF national focal points for data submission in the Mediterranean [3 days]	23–26 February 2016	GFCM HQ, Rome	(2)
Regional Conference on Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea [4 days]	7–10 March 2016	Algeria	(2)
Eighteenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee [4 days]	21–24 March 2016	TBD	(1)

* (1) covered by the autonomous budget and open to extrabudgetary funds to facilitate attendance

(2) minimum extrabudgetary funds already secured

(3) subject to the availability of extrabudgetary funds

CAQ MEETING	DATE	VENUE	FUNDING SOURCE*
Meeting in support of the implementation of Allocated Zones for Aquaculture (AZA) for aquaculture development (SHoCMed project) [2 days]	September–October 2015	TBC, Georgia	(2)
Meeting on shellfish aquaculture priorities and specific indicators , including methodological sheets [2 days]	23–25 November 2015	Cattolica, Italy	(2)
Regional wrap-up workshops of the InDAM and SHoCMed projects [2 days]	26–27 November 2015	Cattolica, Italy	(2)
Workshop on current practices for aquaculture marine spatial planning	February 2016	TBD	(2)
Workshop to develop regional guidelines on the simplification of administrative procedures [3 days]	TBD	TBD	(3)
Tenth session of CAQ including the special session of SIPAM [3 days]	February–March 2017	Turkey	(1)

WGBS MEETING	DATE	VENUE	FUNDING SOURCE*
Training for Black Sea riparian countries control experts	24–25 November 2015	Constanta, Romania	(2)
Subregional Group on Stock Assessment in the Black Sea (SGSABS) [4 days including sessions on benchmark assessment of turbot, anchovy and red mullet, and harmonizing surveys-at-sea]	3–6 November 2015	Burgas, Bulgaria	(1)
Meeting of DCRF national focal points for data submission in the Black Sea [3 days]	December 2015	Trabzon, Turkey	(2)
Workshop on the management of anchovy in the Black Sea [2 days]	15–16 December 2015	Trabzon, Turkey	(3)
Fifth meeting of the Working Group on the Black Sea [3 days]	5–7 April 2016	Kiev, Ukraine	(1)

COC MEETING	DATE	VENUE	FUNDING SOURCE*
Working group on legislations and the Compendium of GFCM decisions [3 days]	9–11 December 2015	FAO HQ, Rome	(3)
Intersessional meeting of the Compliance Committee [2 days]	19–20 January 2016	FAO HQ, Rome	(1)
Working group on IUU fishing [3 days]	19–21 April 2016	TBD	(3)

SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Report on administrative and financial issues

109. The sixth session of the CAF was called to order by its Chairperson, Mr Hachemi Missaoui. After recalling the items on the agenda, he presented the work carried out by the Secretariat during the intersession (document GFCM:XXXIX/2015/6) relating to the coordination of activities and meetings agreed by the Commission, cooperation with non-Members, partner organizations and relevant FAO departments, as well as upgrades in information technology (IT) services and communication enhancement. He also informed the Committee about aspects related to the staffing and functioning of the Secretariat as well as the GFCM headquarters.

110. The Chairperson summarized the financial situation, indicating that the annual contributions received from Members amounted to 90 percent of the adopted budget and that – despite the arrears received – the working capital fund had been completely absorbed by the outstanding contributions amounting to US dollars 596 688, resulting furthermore in a cash deficit of US dollars 204 637 as of 31 December 2014. After detailing the autonomous budget expenditures by chapter as well as the income and expenditures of extrabudgetary funds, he concluded with an overview showing overexpenditure in the autonomous budget (due to unforeseen activities related to the amendment process) as well as a positive balance triggered by extrabudgetary funds for ad hoc activities.

111. The work of the Committee in backstopping the implementation of GFCM activities during the intersession was repeatedly praised by Members. The delegate of the EU, followed by other delegations, reiterated their commitment to keep on providing extrabudgetary resources to reinforce the means of the GFCM in order to achieve its strategic objectives. Nonetheless, the growing cash deficit was considered as a threat to the proper functioning of the GFCM, calling for immediate remedial solutions. In this regard, the Executive Secretary referred to the advantages of a triennial budget, also stressing the urgency of receiving arrears and the need to consider establishing a capital fund budget heading at 3.5 percent of the autonomous budget to be used as a financial resource and exchange reserve.

112. The delegates of Slovenia and Cyprus explained that their contributions had not been fully paid due to internal administrative procedures and confirmed that the outstanding sums had been recently paid or would be paid shortly. The delegate of Lebanon clarified that the delay of his country in acquitting its contribution to the GFCM was due to circumstances beyond the control of the competent Ministry, and expressed hopes that such situation would be resolved swiftly.

113. The delegate of Libya reiterated the commitment of his country to pay all the arrears due as soon as the political situation in his country would be restored. In response to a question of the

Chairperson, the delegate of Monaco recalled that discussions related to 2011 arrears were still ongoing with the Secretariat, pointing out that Monaco had regularly been paying its contribution since then, in addition to having recently contributed to the FWP.

114. In reply to a request for clarification made by the delegate of Egypt, the Executive Secretary explained that Israel had not ratified the 1997 agreement, nor participated in the vote for the selection of the GFCM Executive Secretary and was therefore not contributing to the GFCM autonomous budget.

115. Finally, the Executive Secretary made reference to a Director-General bulletin on FAO corporate identity that invited the GFCM to align itself with new IT policies. As a result, it was instructed that the administration of the Secretariat's IT systems should be handed over to the FAO Information Technology Division in due course, while the issue related to the management and development of these services (under the control of the Secretariat thus far) would be further discussed. He assured that the Commission would be duly kept abreast, especially in light of potential practical and financial implications.

116. In this regard, the GFCM Chairperson, supported by numerous delegations, made explicit reference to the consistent advances in terms of IT that had allowed the GFCM to discharge its duties more effectively, both from a technical and a budgetary point of view. He insisted on the importance of maintaining the same level, flexibility, amount and quality of services provided thus far to Members and in support of the ambitious work programme of the Commission. The delegate of the EU stated that the multiple advantages generated by the use of the recently deployed technologies were clearly helping his organization in particular to better engage in GFCM activities.

GFCM budget and Members contributions for 2015–2017

117. The Executive Secretary submitted a triennial budget to the consideration of the Committee, in line with the GFCM Agreement, which included new activities deriving from the discussions held during the thirty-ninth session of the Commission, with a firm budget proposal for 2015 and 2016 as well as a tentative budget for 2017. He explained that the triennial budget included the new 3.5 percent heading to replenish the GFCM working capital fund as well as an additional chapter at the 2.5 percent aiming to constitute the participation fund, as endorsed in the amended GFCM financial regulations, the latter with no allocations for the triennial period.

118. The Committee commended the remarkable efforts undertaken in providing solid explanations for each budget line and endorsed the new allocations, including for the capital fund and the recruitment of a Liaison Officer (P-2) starting from November 2015.

119. The delegate of Libya expressed concerns regarding the calculation of the contribution of his country, arguing that the data for the catch component had to be reviewed in light of the situation in the country that had hampered the normal conduct of fisheries activities as well as the collection and submission of fisheries-related data. The Executive Secretary clarified that updates related to Libyan catch data should be reported through the official channels to relevant FAO services and underscored the availability of the Secretariat to assist in this endeavour.

120. In addition, the Executive Secretary reported that he had just been notified by the FAO that its new cost recovery policy, as recently approved by the FAO Council, would take effect from 1 January 2016 and replace the current policy on cost recovery and (improved cost recovery uplift [ICRU]). The Executive Secretary confirmed that he would liaise with relevant FAO services to seek additional information on the new policy and ensure that the current – and favourable – conditions governing servicing costs for the GFCM would continue to apply, since the new FAO policy provided for flexibility in applying existing indirect support cost rates for existing long-term trust fund accounts with specific support cost arrangements.

121. The 2015 budget for a total amount of **US dollars 2 359 564** and the 2016 budget for a total amount of **US dollars 2 479 727** were adopted as included in Appendixes 13 (1) and 14 (1), respectively. The corresponding contributions of Members to the GFCM budget for both years are available in Appendixes 13 (2) and 14 (2), respectively.

Election of the CAF Bureau

122. The Executive Secretary referred to Rule VII of the GFCM rules of procedure whereby members of the Bureau could serve a two-year term, renewable once, and should be elected among delegates or alternates attending the session at which the election took place. He informed that the mandate of the current CAF Bureau had expired.

123. The Committee commended the outgoing Bureau for its dedication and for its remarkable work to carry out the tasks of the Committee.

124. Upon proposal of the delegate of Morocco, supported by the delegates of Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, the EU, Libya and Lebanon, the Commission unanimously agreed to exceptionally reconduct for another two-year mandate the current CAF Bureau composed of Mr Hachemi Missaoui, from Tunisia, as Chairperson, Mr Aleksandar Joksimovic, from Montenegro, as First Vice-Chairperson, and Ms Mimoza Cobani, from Albania, as Second Vice-Chairperson, and to submit the proposal to the Commission for endorsement.

ELECTION OF THE GFCM BUREAU AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE BUREAU OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES

125. The Executive Secretary referred to Rule VII of the GFCM rules of procedure related to the election of the Bureau, whereby members of the Bureau could serve a two-year term, renewable once, and should be elected among delegates or alternates attending the session at which the election took place. He informed that the mandate of the GFCM Bureau had expired.

126. The Commission warmly thanked the Bureau for the great effort paying tribute to the considerable results obtained and the progress made on several fronts.

127. Upon the proposal of Tunisia, supported by the delegations of Libya, Lebanon, Algeria, Montenegro and Morocco, the Commission unanimously agreed to reconduct the Bureau for another two-year term. The GFCM Bureau, as extended, would be composed of Mr Sefano Cataudella, from Italy, as Chairperson, Ms Esra Fatma Denizci, from Turkey, as First Vice-Chairperson, and Mr Madani Ali Madani, from Egypt, replacing Mr Philippe Ferlin as Second Vice-Chairperson.

128. Moreover, the Commission unanimously endorsed the new Bureaus of the CAQ, CoC and CAF as elected at the last session of these committees.

ANY OTHER MATTER

129. The Commission thanked the Government of Italy for hosting the thirty-ninth session and holding its opening in the exceptional setting of Expo 2015 as well as for the excellent support provided to ensure the proper organization of the session.

130. Gratitude was expressed to the GFCM Secretariat for the excellent work done and for the efforts made in the preparation of and during the session.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE FORTIETH SESSION

131. The Commission took note of the kind invitation made by the delegation of Malta to host the fortieth session in 2016, subject to official confirmation by the competent authorities.

132. In relation to the date of the session, the Executive Secretary clarified that since the budget had been adopted for two years, the constraint of holding the annual session in May did no longer exist. Considering its rich working programme, the Commission agreed to maintain a certain level of flexibility, leaving the possibility to hold the next annual session either in May or at the beginning of July 2016, after consultations with the delegations.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

133. The report, including its appendixes as well as the reports of the CoC and the CAF, was adopted on 29 May 2015.

List of annexes

- 1) **Agenda**
- 2) **List of participants**
- 3) **List of documents**
- 4) **Statements pronounced at the thirty-ninth session of the Commission**
- 5) **Amended GFCM Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations**
- 6) **Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/1 establishing further precautionary and emergency measures in 2016 for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GSA 17 and GSA 18)**
- 7) **Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2 on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries on demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan**
- 8) **Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/3 on the establishment of a set of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea**
- 9) **Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/4 on management measures for piked dogfish in the Black Sea**
- 10) **Terms of reference for the task force on a “Strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea Aquaculture”**
- 11) **Terms of references for selected tasks related to the Compliance Committee**
- 12) **Pending proposal of Tunisia for a GFCM Recommendation on the establishment of a closing season in the GFCM GSA 14**
- 13) **GFCM autonomous budget and contributions for 2015**
- 14) **GFCM autonomous budget and contributions for 2016**

Agenda

1. Opening and arrangements of the session
2. Amendment process of GFCM Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations
3. Cooperation with non-contracting parties and party organizations
4. Ninth session of the Compliance Committee (CoC)
5. Management of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture, including report on intersessional activities
6. Programme of work for the intersessional period 2015–2016
7. Sixth session of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF)
8. Election of the GFCM Bureau and endorsement of the Bureaus of the subsidiary bodies
9. Any other matter
10. Date and place of the fortieth session
11. Review and adoption of the report

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List of documents

GFCM:XXXIX/2015/1	Provisional agenda and timetable (available in English and French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/2	Report on the amendment of the GFCM Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations, including the functioning of the subsidiary bodies (available in Arabic, English, French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/3	Report on fisheries intersessional activities in 2014–2015, recommendations and workplan for 2015–2016 (available in Arabic, English, French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/4	Report on aquaculture intersessional activities in 2014–2015, recommendations and workplan for 2015–2016 (available in Arabic, English, French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/5 (CoC 9)	Executive report on selected issues and activities before the Compliance Committee (available in Arabic, English, French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/6 (CAF 6)	Report of the Secretariat on administrative and financial issues (available in Arabic, English, French)
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GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.1	Provisional list of documents (available in English and French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.2	Statement of competence and voting rights by the European Union and its Member States (available in English only)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.3	Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (as amended in 2014) (available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.4	Draft amended GFCM Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations (available in Arabic, English and French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.5	Report of the intersessional meeting of the Commission on the amendment of the GFCM Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations (FAO headquarters, 26–28 January 2015) (available in English only)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.6	Report of the thirty-eighth session of the GFCM (FAO headquarters, 19–24 May 2014) (available in Arabic, English and French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.7	Report of the seventeenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) (FAO headquarters, 24–27 March 2015) (bilingual English and French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.8	Report of the ninth session of the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) (Marrakech, Morocco, 24–26 February 2015) (bilingual English and French)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.9	Report of the fourth meeting of the Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS) (Georgia, 9–11 March 2015) (available in English only)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.10	GFCM framework for cooperation and arrangements with non-contracting parties and party organizations (available in English only)
GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.11	Report of the intersessional meeting of Compliance Committee (FAO headquarters, 26–28 January 2015) (available in English only)

- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.12 Report of the Working Group on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (Morocco, 22–24 April 2015) (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.13 Report of the Working Group on VMS and related control systems, including preliminary technical provisions on data transmission standards in view of the pilot study for the establishment of a GFCM centralized VMS and related control systems (Morocco, 20–21 April 2015) (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.14 Status of the Compendium of GFCM decisions and proposed action for its update (available in English and French)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.15 Status of implementation by Members of decisions adopted at the thirty-seventh and thirty eighth sessions of the Commission (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.16 GFCM IUU vessel list (available in English only)
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- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.18 Comparative analysis between the DCRF and current GFCM decisions (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.19 Conclusions of the Regional Aquaculture Conference 2014 “Blue Growth in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: developing sustainable aquaculture for food security” (Bari, Italy, 9–11 December 2014) (bilingual English and French)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.20 Draft guidelines for the sustainable management of coastal lagoons in the Mediterranean and Black Sea (available in English and French)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.21 Regional indicators to monitor sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (available in English and French)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Inf.22 Report on major activities and ongoing developments of FAO projects in the Mediterranean (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Dma.1 Proceedings of the First Regional Symposium on Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (Malta, November 2013) (draft) (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Dma.2 Biennial report on the status of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries (draft) (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Dma.3 *Aquaculture highlights from the Mediterranean and the Black Sea*. FAO-GFCM and Eurofish. 2014 (available in English only)
- GFCM:XXXIX/2015/Dma.4 *Guidelines for artificial reefs applications in the context of an integrated maritime approach in the Mediterranean and Black Sea*. GFCM Studies and Reviews. 2015 (Advance copy) (available in English only)

Statements pronounced at the thirty-ninth session of the Commission**Honourable Giuseppe Castiglione,
Under-Secretary of State for Agricultural, Food and Forestry policies, Italy**

Italy is honored to host the thirty-ninth session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and Black Sea, here in Milan, at the Expo.

This occasion has been strongly sought for a precise political reason: that of offering the delegates of the Member States the best of an Italy that, as a member of the European Union, is dedicated to the future of a planet that we have to feed, so that we can feed ourselves and guarantee our children's future.

For the Mediterranean, nothing is more appropriate than fisheries, when we talk about shared resources, interrelated cultures and open-ended space that need to be managed together, following common rules.

But fisheries are suffering. They need urgent policies to maintain their economic activities and social functions in an environment that is protected from illegal fishing and the numerous impacts that alter ecosystems, particularly the more sensitive habitats.

For Italy, there has never been any doubt, and this is even more the case today: fisheries are fully part of Mediterranean cooperation policies. This is the reason why we have continuously and vigorously supported the GFCM, offering a prestigious headquarters to dignify fisheries and aquaculture in our common region, from Gibraltar to the Black Sea.

Today, in the European Union, we are building a common fisheries policy with other Member States; we want rules that are shared and can be easily interpreted and applied by fishers and by those who are in charge of controls. Within this context, in accordance with international agreements, we participate actively and constructively in the work of the GFCM.

In the same spirit, we contribute, in coordination with the EU, to the subregional projects of the FAO, as we are convinced that each subregion requires locally adapted tools. Italy is proud of the positive results achieved through these projects, in particular AdriaMed and MedsudMed.

A heartfelt thank you to all the delegations for having accepted our invitation, thank you to the FAO, thank you to the GFCM Bureau that represents us as Members, and finally, thank you to the Secretariat and to our administrations.

Árni Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO

Allow me to greet you on behalf of the FAO Director-General, Mr. José Graziano Da Silva, and welcome you all at the opening session of the thirty-ninth session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean of the FAO, which also includes the ninth session of the GFCM's Compliance Committee and the sixth session of the GFCM's Committee of Administration and Finance. First and foremost, I would like to warmly thank the government of Italy for hosting this important session and also commend it for having aptly selected the city of Milan as the location for this session. Today, in particular, we have the pleasure of gathering at the Expo area, thus being ourselves a part of this superb initiative that is Expo 2015.

A few months ago, right here in Milan, the FAO Director-General expressed the "proud" support given by the FAO to Italy and Milan in relation to the organization of Expo 2015. On that occasion, Mr. Graziano Da Silva delivered a speech at "the Expo of Ideas" event underlining the role of Expo 2015 as a universal exposition for all the countries of the world to address global issues. He also recalled the importance of the year 2015 in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals of hunger reduction and sustainability promotion. Let me assure you that the FAO remains strongly committed to making our planet more sustainable and, in fact, an integral part of the FAO's agenda is the sustainability of oceans. To this end, we have recently launched the FAO Blue Growth Initiative.

I do not need to stress here, in front of an audience of illustrious experts, the significant contribution that fisheries and aquaculture make towards food security and the livelihoods of millions of people along the world's seashores and waterways. However, I would like to tell you that through the FAO Blue Growth Initiative the FAO seeks to shine a spotlight on that contribution by providing a coherent framework for the sustainable and socioeconomic management of our aquatic resources. Our initiative focuses on promoting and conserving the importance of living natural resources of the marine and fresh-water environment, as well as linked ecosystems, and conserving these resources for the benefit of present and future generations. We attempt to carry out this ambitious goal by addressing four key components in the framework of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative. These are: marine and inland capture fisheries, aquaculture, livelihoods and foods systems and economic growth from ecosystem services. These components are all particularly relevant for the GFCM, which brings me to the importance I attach to participating in this session.

The FAO Blue Growth Initiative builds upon the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which was adopted by all FAO member countries twenty years ago and which, by now, has become a global reference – and benchmark – for fisheries and aquaculture development. In its 12 articles, references to Regional Fisheries Management Organizations are abundant because the new governance concepts introduced via the Code, albeit global and overarching, are expected to be implemented by FAO member countries cooperating at the regional and subregional level. In my opinion, the Code is hands-down the flagship achievement of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department. It has proven to be extremely forward-looking and a truly living document which remains relevant and central to responsible and sustainable fisheries. The living nature of this document is reflected in the evolution of the GFCM over the last two decades. As the GFCM is an RFMO created within the framework of the FAO, under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution, I am very pleased to affirm that its institutional development has historically been shaped around the relevant FAO policies on fisheries and aquaculture.

In 1997, two years after the adoption of the FAO Code of Conduct, the GFCM amended its constitutive agreement with a view to embody the very principles of sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture put forth by the Code. Since the entry into force of this amendment in 2004, the GFCM has been working hard and efficiently to adopt conservation and management measures in line with those of the FAO. In this regard, it suffices to mention those GFCM decisions relating to the fight against IUU fishing, Port State measures, the ban of destructive fishing practices, the timely collection of data and area-based management tools. All of these decisions have underpinned the FAO Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries that was envisioned by the FAO to supplement the framework for marine capture fisheries and aquaculture, initially put in place by the FAO Code of Conduct.

When, in 2007, the FAO Committee on Fisheries urged RFMOs to undertake a review of their performances in order to modernize their legal and institutional frameworks, the GFCM took immediate action. It launched its own performance review in 2009. When this review was completed in 2011, the GFCM recognized that there was a need to further amend its constitutive agreement and, to that end, it set up an ad hoc task force which has worked in a very transparent manner for almost three years. Ultimately, on 20 May 2014, I myself participated in the historical day when the fourth amendment to the GFCM Agreement was endorsed at the thirty-eighth session of the Commission. Once again, I had the opportunity to appreciate the proactive stance of the GFCM with regard to governance reforms. Not only, in my view, is the 2014 amendment fully consistent with the FAO Blue Growth Initiative, but to the best of my knowledge the GFCM is currently the only RFMO that explicitly acknowledges, and I quote, “that the conservation and sustainable use of the living marine resources in the area of application (the Mediterranean and the Black Sea) and the protection of the marine ecosystems in which those resources occur plays a major role in the context of blue growth and sustainable development”.

From an institutional point of view, I thus deem the work of the GFCM - in both the Mediterranean and the Black Sea – to be steady and exemplary. Moreover, the GFCM’s work is fully in line with those general policies of the FAO relating to sustainable development, as referred to in the speech by the FAO Director-General at “the Expo of Ideas” last February, as well as with the specific policies advocated by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, including the recent FAO Blue Growth Initiative. Let’s not be mistaken, however, and think of this as a purely theoretical achievement. Admittedly, the challenges the GFCM currently faces in ensuring the sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture are ample and complex, and I’ll leave the GFCM President with the responsibility of mentioning them in his own speech, however, tangible progress is being made every year. This session carries with it many expectations and I trust that you, the national delegates in particular, will live up to these expectations by making concrete proposals for conservation and management measures, capitalizing on the scientific advice that was provided during the intersession in relation to both the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea. As far as the Black Sea is concerned, I would like to take a moment to express my deep satisfaction in seeing the representatives of the riparian countries here in Milan. I am well aware of the efforts by the GFCM to enhance cooperation in the Black Sea and I hope that today a decisive step in the right direction will be made when considering the requests for cooperating non-contracting party status with the Commission.

In concluding, I cannot neglect to express gratitude to the FAO regional projects for the significant contribution provided to the work of the GFCM by ensuring technical and scientific support during the intersession and to the donors to these projects - namely Italy, Spain and the European Union - as well as to the donors of the GFCM Framework Programme, which also include France and Monaco. With regards to the European Union, I would like to convey my greetings to the EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Mr Karmenu Vella, who is here with us today. His presence among us reflects the continuous interest of the European Union in closely cooperating with other GFCM contracting parties to further support to the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

I wish you success and I thank you very much for your attention.

Stefano Cataudella, Chairperson, GFCM

I am delighted to be here in Milan today, at the Biodiversity Pavilion of Expo 2015, and to welcome you all to the thirty-ninth session of the GFCM, including the ninth session of the Compliance Committee and the sixth session of the Committee of Administration and Finance. Allow me to also add my own words of gratitude to our host country, Italy, which had the marvellous idea of inviting us to Expo 2015 for the opening of this session. Of course, I would also like to thank you, the participants, for your attendance at this annual meeting of the Commission.

As you are aware, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region is a confluence of complex ecological, economic, social and legal realities. Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries are particularly sensitive to the complexities of this region, given that they are confined to a relatively small marine area and they are shared by many. In recognition of this, in 1949 the FAO established the GFCM by means of Article XIV of the FAO Constitution. Under the provision of Article XIV, the FAO may adopt agreements concerning issues of food and agriculture, including fisheries, which are of particular interest to nations of specific geographical areas. Such is the case of the Mediterranean and Black Sea region and, therefore, the FAO designed the GFCM to operate, from the outset, as an ad hoc instrument for addressing relevant sectoral policies in the region.

Over the last six decades, we have witnessed an impressive evolution of the GFCM from an institutional standpoint. Demographic and economic growth in Mediterranean and Black Sea riparian countries has necessitated, among other things, complicated socioeconomic and environmental decisions with regard to fisheries and aquaculture. To accommodate such regional developments, the need to modernize the GFCM was evident. In 2011 the Commission established a task force to set clear goals, responsibilities and procedures for the reform process. Using a participatory approach, the task force sought to ensure the full and active participation of all GFCM Members in this process, providing a platform for Members to voice their experiences, needs and know-how, and thus ensuring that the reform was driven by the Members themselves.

In an international setting, the formulation of common and shared rules is the cornerstone of good governance and a guarantee of success for the subsequent implementation of these rules. I am pleased to underline that both the Commission and the Secretariat, each acting upon the authority of its respective mandate, have been successfully working as a cohesive unit for the past four years. After numerous meetings and consultations, ultimately, on 20 May 2014, at its thirty-eighth session, the Commission endorsed a set of amendments to the GFCM Agreement. According to the FAO Council, the amendments were fully in line with the Basic Texts of the Organization and they have thus entered into force. We are in fact completing the certification and registration of the amended GFCM Agreement and the signature of the FAO Director-General, who acts as depositary of the agreement, should be forthcoming.

A modern institutional framework, like the one we now have, is crucial for addressing the weaknesses of the GFCM. These weaknesses, of which we are all well aware, concern all of us. I am referring in particular to the alarming status of marine living resources in both the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. In response to the Commission's call for action last year, the SAC has considerably improved both the quantity and the quality of the scientific advice. As a result of the stock assessments carried out and validated during the intersession at the regional and subregional level, we have never before had so many pieces of scientific advice upon which to act. As we contemplate the kind of action we can take in light of this scientific advice, we must ensure we keep the alarming status of the marine living resources at the forefronts of our discussions. Furthermore, we must affront this enormous challenge under the unfortunate circumstances of limited budgetary capabilities.

On the bright side, the reform process has brought about enhanced transparency and shifted decision-making toward a bottom-up approach. This has reinforced cohesion, an element that is at the very heart of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries. Historically and metaphorically speaking, this region continuously builds bridges, rather than barriers, between its riparian countries. And fisheries have always been a multi-ethnic forum for the sharing of knowledge and experience. The challenge of the

GFCM is to work within such a diverse context in a way that is cohesive rather than piecemeal. Building upon the results of the reform process I think that we can realistically achieve this ambitious goal.

This leads me to call upon all our Members to do better and to do more. In our quest to improve, we should be mindful of our strengths and weaknesses, as well as of our potential opportunities and pitfalls. We need to be better at engaging civil society, from research institutions and academia, to non-governmental organizations, fishers' associations and the private sector. Based on my professional experience, I attach particular importance to the role of researchers, as they are invaluable in helping us to envision the future of fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean Sea. This future has to be ecologically and socioeconomically sustainable and equitable. Consequently, the GFCM should act as a forum for promoting dialogue regarding development cooperation and, within the remit of its mandate, the GFCM should attempt to address development issues currently unfolding in the region. After all, fisheries have a social dimension; they play an important role in alleviating poverty and counteracting the inequitable distribution of resources. I take great care to stress the words equity and solidarity in the context of our work. We are obliged by the principles of sustainable development to conserve our marine resources for both present and future generations. Not only is this intra- and inter-generational obligation and ethical obligation, but it is also a legal obligation, recognized by international law.

To fulfil these obligations towards sustainable development, our work must be tailored to the different needs of the GFCM region and subregions, it must be grounded in the principle of sovereignty of States, it must be scientifically robust and it must be fully consistent with FAO rules, including those on the functional autonomy of Article XIV bodies. Only in this way can I foresee the GFCM making progress on the development of common policies to enhance the environmental and social sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture while also providing a meaningful contribution to addressing food security issues in the form of functional food.

In concluding, I would like to thank the FAO, the GFCM-FAO Secretariat. I thank all the countries present here at this thirty-ninth session in Milan; for the reasons I have previously mentioned, I encourage each of you to consider ways in which you can do more. I express my gratitude to the NGOs and observers that are present – your contributions are invaluable to the work of the GFCM and the Commission inaugurated and to all the researchers from national institutes that, despite limited resources, have significantly contributed to broadening our knowledge. Last but not least, I would like to thank all the fishers of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. It is through their work, tradition and generosity that we are able to benefit from all the services and products derived from marine living resources. Letting them down would be, from our position as the regional Commission responsible of fisheries and aquaculture, an institutional failure.

Without keeping you any longer, I thank you very much for your attention and I look forward to our discussions.

**Karmenu Vella, Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries,
European Commission**

One year's progress

First I'd like to say it is a great pleasure to finally meet you all in my capacity as European Commissioner.

I know that this time last year you had fixed some important priorities and I think we can be proud of the progress made since then. I refer, in particular, to the reform of the organisation.

The GFCM is now better equipped to play its role in a modern, competent and effective way.

I can now see this role – and the leadership – of GFCM grow further in the future.

Together, we have the power to reverse some very negative trends of overfishing – the power to make a real difference. And we need to use that power urgently and positively. And in order to do that, I am sure we also have the goodwill.

Scientific advice

Today's fishing industry could only be sustainable if it is based on scientific advice.

It is no secret that many Mediterranean species are heavily overfished. Stocks are critically low, in some cases even in danger.

To reverse this potentially devastating trend, we need scientific knowledge of their status as a basis for rigorous action.

I know the organisation is making great efforts in this direction, but reliable data is still unavailable for far too many stocks. This makes it impossible to provide accurate assessments.

We have to make a serious commitment to do more to gather this crucial data; and then, equally importantly, we have to share it among ourselves.

Doing more means that each contracting party cooperates to facilitate regular monitoring and data collection and that every country undertakes all actions necessary to support the work of our scientists.

Working with science rather than against it is in our common interest. It is the *modus operandi* on which the EU works and which I continue to encourage. I would like to see such cooperation extend throughout the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. I believe such cooperation will be the basis on which we can ensure the longer term survival of both our fish stocks, and our fishing industries. The Commission stands ready to assist our partners through all available means to improve the quality of work and cooperation with the scientific community.

The knowledge obtained, combined with an in depth socioeconomic analysis, must remain central to our collective decision-making process. A science-based approach will be instrumental to increasing our collective trust and buy-in amongst all the parties. Ultimately, we all stand to benefit.

But we also need to act in cases where we don't yet have the necessary science to develop proper management measures. Lack of data should not be an excuse for not protecting the stocks and we should be guided by the precautionary approach.

Management Plans/ Cooperation with third countries

Like any other sector, our industry needs to be well planned and well managed. Our efforts must be conceived with the bigger picture in mind.

Because we share many of our stocks among different countries, we need to work towards common long-term plans throughout the Mediterranean. They can be tailored to the different subregions – and we need to manage them properly, in order to bring our marine living resources back to health.

I know that cooperation is not always easy, but we have a vested interest in working together: by increasing yields, we will restore the sector's confidence and its economic prospects for the future.

We have a similar situation in the Black Sea, which is also shared with third countries and also has stocks in a critical condition.

Here too the Commission is advocating a common approach, with transparent management standards that translate into concrete operational measures. This was my message in March during the Black Sea stakeholder conference in Sofia.

We will continue to push for progress in both sea basins, precisely because we have fish stocks in common. If we do not – we will suffer collectively – economically, socially and politically – through diminished resources vital for our very own livelihood.

The prerequisite is that all countries, including the non-GFCM Members, get on board. It is imperative that we reach out to them, also via the other international organisations active in the Mediterranean such as the Union for the Mediterranean and the Dialogue 5+5, so that even if they don't join, at least they can be aware of our common motivation and initiatives.

Level playing field/compliance

We also need a level playing field between all parties, especially in the area of compliance.

The reasons for a level playing field are several, and they are in fact the same reasons as to why we have to have complete and uniform compliance with the rules:

If not everyone is playing by the same rules, we will not save our industry and we will not have sufficient stocks to feed our children in the future.

Blue Growth

Apart from fisheries, I would like to make some comments about blue growth and other maritime opportunities to which our fishing industries are also connected.

Some of you may think that with fisheries in a poor state of recovery, the outlook for the Mediterranean is rather bleak.

I beg to disagree. We will be able to keep fishing if we restrain the efforts now and let the stocks recover. It has been done elsewhere: for example, the haddock fishery in the North East Atlantic is already giving increased returns from fishing the stock at a sustainable level.

It can also be done in the Mediterranean. So first let's take care of our stocks.

In parallel, the blue economy has opened up new opportunities for our fishermen.

Diversification allows them to expand their business.

There are plenty of opportunities in the maritime economy and fishing communities can also engage in other promising activities, for example fish farming or ecotourism where their vessels could be utilised for tourist excursions, research and education purposes. I also see an important role for them to contribute towards cleaning up our seas through collecting plastic litter and ghost gear such as abandoned fishing nets.

The knowledge of fishermen cultural heritage, underwater archaeological sites and local fishing traditions is an economic asset that can be better deployed.

Right now we have in fact some fishermen testing the long-term viability of such alternatives in a pilot project called "Guardians of the Sea" that the Commission is carrying out with the support of the European Parliament.

My point is that the Mediterranean Sea has a great potential for sustainable growth and job creation and fishermen are set to benefit.

It is up to us to find smart ways to exploit it without depleting its resources.

I am determined to engage positively and constructively with all of you as the Members of the GFCM as well as with partnering countries from outside of the EU. As you are aware the EU is active on many fronts. Encouraging sustainable business models within the blue economy is one of my personal priorities.

We are in fact only just starting to fully appreciate the extent of the economic impact of blue industries on our economy. I want to work to seize these opportunities and attract further investment across all dimensions of the Mediterranean.

With new opportunity, however, must come added responsibility.

As EU Commissioner, I continue to urge our Member States to live up to their obligations to comply with strict EU standards. I can assure you that when rules are broken, the Commission will take all necessary action to ensure responsibilities are fulfilled.

The benefits of the EU's commitments however, clearly extend beyond EU borders and across the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions. For which reason I very much encourage all parties to remain equally ambitious in your commitments and to agree to our proposals to tackle overfishing.

The scientific evidence justifying urgent measures has been clear enough – it is now high-time that national management plans fully reflect reductions in fishing capacity and effort before the end of the year and to ensure that such measures are sufficiently fit for purpose.

My commitment to you is that I am not only prepared, but determined to make sure EU resources are deployed in ways that take account of the full extent of the challenges our common waters face.

So ladies and gentlemen, my aspiration is for us to work as partners in the years to come, hopefully welcoming new Members into the organisation soon, to counter any irresponsible use of marine resources, to stop the downward trend in our stocks, and to find new outlets for our people and new potential for the Mediterranean Sea.

Amended rules of procedure of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean¹

Rule I – Definitions

1. For the purpose of these Rules, **the terms shall have the same meaning as those used in the Agreement, and in addition** the following definitions apply:

Agreement: The Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean adopted in Rome (Italy) on 24 September 1949, as amended in accordance with Article X thereof, hereinafter referred to as the Agreement;

Bureau: The Bureau established in accordance with Article 7 of the Agreement;

Commission: The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean;

Chairperson: The Chairperson of the Commission;

Conference: The Conference of the Organization.

Council: The Council of the Organization.

Delegate: The representative of a Contracting Party as specified in Article H, paragraph 1 ~~6~~ of the Agreement;

Delegation: The delegate and his/**her** alternate, experts and advisers;

Director-General: The Director-General of the Organization;

Executive Secretary: The **Executive** Secretary of the Commission **appointed in accordance with Article 10 of the Agreement;**

Headquarters: The headquarters of the Commission under Article H, paragraph 1 ~~2~~ of the Agreement.

~~Member: Members and Associate Members of the Organization, and non-members of the Organization, or regional economic integration organizations as may be Members of the Commission.~~

~~Observer Nation: A nation that is not a Member of the Commission or a Member of FAO or Associate Member of the Organization, but which is a Member of the United Nations, any of its Specialized Agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency, attending a session of the Commission while not being a Member of the Commission.~~

~~International organization participating as observer: An international, intergovernmental or non-governmental organization attending a session of the Commission or its Committees or its subsidiary bodies while not being a Member of the Commission.~~

Observer: any Member Nation of the Organization which is not a Contracting Party and any international governmental organization or non-governmental organization attending sessions of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies in accordance with Article 15 of the Agreement;

Organization: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;

Vice-Chairpersons: The Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission.

¹ Note to the reader. In this document:

- (i) text in normal font comes from the GFCM Rules of Procedure currently in force. It is proposed to retain it;
- (ii) text which appears in ~~strike through~~ is found in the GFCM Rules of Procedure currently in force. It is proposed to delete it;
- (iii) text which appears in **bold and underlined** is new as opposed to the GFCM Rules of Procedure currently in force. It is proposed to include it.

Rule II – Sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies

1. ~~In pursuance of, and in accordance with, Article II, paragraph 10 of the Agreement, The Commission shall, at each regular session, decide the time and place of the next session in accordance with the requirements of the Commission's programmes and the terms of the invitation of the country Contracting Party in which the session is to be held, as appropriate, **and in consultation with the Director-General.** Sessions of the Commission may be held in a country which is a Member of the Commission or at its headquarters or at the headquarters of the Organization.~~

2. The Chairperson may convene an extraordinary session of the Commission ~~at the:~~

- (a) **upon request of the Commission;** or
- (b) **upon request of the Bureau** with the approval of **the** a majority of the ~~Members~~ **Contracting Parties;**
- (c) upon request of a Contracting Party, with the approval of the majority of the Contracting Parties.

3. Sessions of the Commission may be held at the headquarters of the Commission, of the Organization or at an agreed location in a country which is a Contracting Party.

~~34. Invitations to a regular session of the Commission shall be issued by the Executive Secretary on behalf of the Chairperson and sent to Members **Contracting Parties, Cooperating-non Contracting Parties and** observer nations and international organizations participating as observers, not less than sixty days in advance of the date fixed for the opening of the session. Invitations to extraordinary sessions shall be issued not less than forty days in advance of the date fixed for the opening of the session. **In the invitations, specific reference shall be made to the provisions in paragraph 6, as appropriate.**~~

5. The same provisions in the Agreement and in these Rules governing the sessions of the Commission shall govern, *mutatis mutandis*, the sessions of the established subsidiary bodies.

~~46. **For a session of the Commission or any of its subsidiary bodies to be held** In order that a proposal to hold a session of the Commission or any of its organs, in a given country, may be considered, **said** country must:~~

- (a) have ~~(a)~~ ratified without reservation the “Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations”, **in view of facilitating the issuance of visas to all delegates, representatives, experts, observers or other persons entitled to attend said session,** or
- (b) **have** given the assurance that all delegates, representatives, experts, observers, or other persons entitled to attend **said** session in accordance with the terms of the Agreement or these Rules, will enjoy the privileges and immunities necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connection with the session. **In this case an agreement between the Organization and the hosting country shall be entered into.**

In both cases the Executive Secretary shall have the mandate to define all logistics and related technical aspects that are instrumental to the organization of the session with the hosting country.

Rule III – Registrations and credentials

1. The Executive Secretary shall make arrangements for the registration of delegates and observers, including by establishing a standard format to that effect. The Executive Secretary shall report to the Commission on the registration of delegates and observers, as may be required.

2. At each session, the **Executive** Secretary shall receive the credentials of delegations **and** ~~observers nations and international organization participating as observers.~~ Such credentials shall conform to the

standard form set by the **Executive Secretary** Secretariat. Upon examination thereof, the **Executive Secretary** Secretariat shall report to the Commission **at the beginning of the session** for the necessary action.

Rule IV – Agenda of the regular session of the Commission

1. The agenda **for each regular session of the Commission** shall be sent **drawn up** by the Executive Secretary to ~~Members~~ **and sent to the Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties** ~~observer nations and international organizations participating as observers~~ **following the approval of the Chairperson. The agenda will also be sent to the observers that attended the previous regular session of the Commission or those that requested to attend the next session, unless the Commission expressly determines otherwise. It shall be sent** not less than **sixty** ~~thirty~~ days before the opening **date** of the session, together with the reports and documents available in connection therewith.

2. The agenda for each regular session shall include, **at a minimum**, the following items:

(a) election of the Chairperson and of two Vice-Chairpersons ~~as provided under~~ **in accordance with Article H, paragraph 9 7** of the Agreement, as appropriate;

(b) adoption of the agenda;

(c) a report by the Executive Secretary on the financial and administrative affairs of the Commission and a report by the Chairperson or the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission;

(d) consideration of the proposed budget;

(e) reports on intersessional activities **and recommendations** of the ~~committees and the~~ subsidiary bodies;

(f) **proposals for the adoption of recommendations pursuant to Article 8(b) of the Agreement;**

(g) **review of the proposed programme of work for the Commission;**

(h) consideration of the time and place of the next session;

(i) applications for membership in accordance with **the Agreement** ~~Article XIII, paragraph 2 of the Agreement, from States which, while not Members of the Organization, are Members of the United Nations, any of its Specialized Agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency;~~

(j) **amendments proposed to the Agreement, if any, in accordance with Article 22 of the Agreement;**

(k) any item referred to the ~~General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean~~ by the Conference, the Council or the Director-General ~~of the Organisation~~;

2. The agenda shall also include upon approval of the Commission:

(a) items approved at the previous session;

(b) items proposed by the committees and **any** subsidiary body;

(c) items proposed by a ~~Member~~ Contracting Party, **as presented to the Secretariat before the agenda is sent out.**

3. Should new items be brought to the attention of the Commission, revised versions of the agenda shall be drawn up, as appropriate, by the Executive Secretary after the agenda has been sent out and transmitted to Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties and observers before the opening date of the session.

4. The agenda of an extraordinary session shall consist only of the items relating to the purpose for which the session was called.

Rule V – The Secretariat and the Executive Secretary

1. The Secretariat shall consist of the Executive Secretary and **the staff under his/her responsibility** as may-be appointed in accordance with the Agreement, **Article 10 in particular**, and other relevant rules and procedures, as appropriate.
2. The Executive Secretary shall be appointed by the Director-General following the approval of the Commission in accordance with ~~the selection procedure agreed upon by the Committee~~ **Article 10 of the Agreement and the procedures set out in Annex 2 of these Rules**.
3. The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for the implementation of the policies and activities of the Commission and shall report thereon to the Commission. **He/She shall transmit to the Director-General, after each session, a report embodying his/her views, recommendations and decisions, and shall make other reports to the Director-General, including regarding his/her duties as defined in paragraph 4, as may seem necessary or desirable.**
4. ~~The procedure for the selection and appointment of the GFCM Executive Secretary is provided in Annex 1.~~
5. The duties of the Executive Secretary shall include **the following**:
 - (a) receive and transmit the Commission's official communications;
 - (b) maintain contacts with appropriate government officials, fishery institutions and international organizations concerned with the development, conservation, rational management and utilization of fisheries, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the ~~Region of the Commission~~ **area of application**, to facilitate consultation and cooperation on all matters pertaining to the objectives of the Commission,
 - (c) maintain an active and effective network of national focal points for routine communication on progress and results of the activities of the Commission;
 - (d) prepare and implement work programmes, prepare budgets and ensure timely reporting to the Commission;
 - (e) authorize disbursement of funds in accordance with the Commission's autonomous budget and account for the funds of the Commission's autonomous budget;
 - (f) participate in the formulation of proposals regarding the budget and programme of work or other activities of the Commission financed by the regular budget of the Organization;
 - (g) stimulate interest among ~~Members~~ **Contracting Parties** of the Commission, **Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, non-Contracting Parties** and potential donors in the activities of the Commission and in possible financing or in implementing cooperative projects and complementary activities;
 - (h) promote, facilitate and monitor the development of databases for fisheries assessment and monitoring, **as well as the development of** technical, biological and socio-economic research, **in order** to provide a sound basis for fisheries management and aquaculture development;
 - (i) coordinate the ~~Members'~~ **research programmes of Contracting Parties**, when required;
 - (j) participate, as appropriate, in the oversight of activities of projects carried out under the general framework of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies;
 - (k) organize sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and other related ad hoc meetings;
 - (l) prepare, or arrange for the preparation **of**, background documents and papers and a report on the Commission's activities and the programme of work for the submission to the Commission at its regular sessions, and arrange for the subsequent publication of the report and the proceedings of the Commission as well as its subsidiary bodies and related ad hoc meetings;
 - (m) take such appropriate steps as may be required to ensure coordination between the activities of the Commission and those carried out by the Organization through its Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, with particular reference to all matters having policy, financial or programme implications;

(n) perform any other function, as may be required by the Commission.

65. Copies of all communications concerning the affairs of the Commission shall be sent to the Executive Secretary for purposes of information and record.

Rule VI – Participation in the sessions of the Commission

1. **In accordance with Article 15 of the Agreement, Plenary meetings sessions** of the Commission **and its subsidiary bodies** shall be held in public **open to observers** unless otherwise decided by the Commission **during the session, upon request of the Chairperson or the Executive Secretary or one or more of the Contracting Parties**. When the Commission decides to hold a private meeting, it shall at the same time, **as appropriate, determine conditions and procedures for the attendance** by the scope of such a decision with respect to observers.

Rule VII – Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

The Commission shall elect, from among delegates or alternates attending the **regular** session at which they are elected, the Chairperson and the first and second Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission, who shall assume office immediately following the regular session at which they were elected and who shall be elected for two regular sessions. The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons shall be eligible for re-election for a further two ~~regular~~ sessions.

Rule VIII – ~~Functions~~ Terms of reference of the Bureau Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons in connection with meetings of the Commission

1. The Chairperson shall exercise the functions conferred on him or her elsewhere in these Rules and, in particular, shall:

- (a) declare the opening and closing of each ~~plenary meeting~~ **session** of the Commission;
- (b) direct the discussions at such ~~meetings~~ **sessions** and ensure observance of these Rules, accord the right to speak, put questions and announce decisions;
- (c) rule on points of order;
- (d) have complete control over the proceedings of the session, **subject to these Rules**;
- (e) appoint committees of the session, as the Commission may direct;

(f) call for votes and announce the results of votes; and

(g) perform any other function that may be decided by the Commission, including those specified in Regulation IV.2 of the Financial Regulations.

2. In the absence of the Chairperson, or at his/**her** request, his/**her** functions shall be exercised by the first Vice-Chairperson or, in the absence of the latter, by the second Vice-Chairperson.

3. The Chairperson, or the Vice-Chairpersons when acting as Chairpersons, shall not vote and another member of their delegation shall represent **the relevant Contracting Party** ~~their government~~.

4. The Executive Secretary shall temporarily exercise the functions of the Chairperson in the event that the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons ~~should be~~ **are** unable to serve.

5. The Commission may adopt rules, consistent with the present Rules, clarifying the functions of **the Bureau** ~~the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons~~, with particular reference to any functions performed during the intersession period.

6. In the intersession period of the Commission, the Bureau, shall exercise its functions in accordance with these Rules.

Rule IX – Voting arrangements and procedures

1. Except as otherwise provided in paragraph 4 of this Rule, voting in plenary meetings shall be by show of hands, unless that a vote by roll call shall be taken if a special majority is required by the Agreement or these Rules, or if a request for a vote by roll call is made by any a Contracting Party requests that the vote be taken by roll call or secret ballot, and such request is seconded.

2. A vote by roll call shall be conducted by calling upon delegations in the French alphabetical order the names of the Contracting Parties entitled to vote in the English alphabetical order. The name of the first Contracting Party to be called shall be designated by lot drawn by the Chairperson.

3. The record of any roll call vote shall show the votes cast by each delegate and any abstention.

4. Unless the Commission decides otherwise, voting shall be by secret ballot on matters relating to individuals, ~~except including~~ the election of the Bureau of the Commission and its ~~committees~~ subsidiary bodies, shall be by secret ballot.

5. When no nominee for an office obtains a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, a second ballot shall be taken, which shall be confined to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes. If, on the second ballot, the votes are equally divided, ~~the Chairperson shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots~~ as many ballots as necessary shall be held in order to determine the elected candidate.

6. Votes cast shall mean “affirmative” and “negative” votes, and shall not include abstentions or defective ballots.

~~67.~~ If the Commission is equally divided when a vote is taken on a question other than an election, a second and third vote shall may be taken at the ~~next meeting of~~ current session. If the Commission is ~~then~~ then remains equally divided, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected not be considered further at the current session.

~~78.~~ Voting arrangements and other related matters not specifically provided for by the Agreement, or by these Rules, shall be governed *mutatis mutandis* by ~~Rule XII of~~ the General Rules of the Organization.

Rule X – ~~Committees, working groups and other s~~Subsidiary bodies of the Commission

~~1. The Committees may establish such~~ Each subsidiary body established pursuant to Article 9 of the Agreement may establish sub-committees and working groups to deal with particular subject matters as may be decided, subject to the provisions of Article VII, paragraph 3 of the Agreement and shall ensure their coordination.

~~5. The Commission may establish such other committees and working groups as it considers desirable, subject to the provisions of Article VII, paragraph 3 of the Agreement.~~

~~72.~~ The relationship between the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, which shall have an advisory nature, will be defined on the decision of the Commission within a reference framework, reproduced in Annex 1 of these Rules, and will be revised when appropriate ~~committees~~

~~and working groups and networks or Coordinators, or national focal points, or other entities as may deal with matters within the purview of the Commission may be clarified, as appropriate, through specific decisions by of the Commission or arrangements to be concluded on behalf of the Commission and the relevant interested parties.~~

3. Any subsidiary body established in accordance with Article 9 of the Agreement shall be convened by the Chairperson of the Commission at such times and places as are determined by the Chairperson in consultation with the Director-General of the Organization, as appropriate.

~~64. The Committees and working groups shall~~ **Any subsidiary body established in accordance with Article 9 of the Agreement shall act under the auspices of the Commission and shall** be governed, *mutatis mutandis*, by the Rules, of Procedure of the Commission as well as **by** such other supplementary procedures, consistent with the present Rules, as **may be established by** the Commission.

5. Each subsidiary body described in Annex 1 shall have a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons who shall be elected from among delegates or alternates of the Contracting Parties in the session of these bodies. Rule VII of the Rules of Procedure shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to the election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of each subsidiary bodies. They shall assume office subsequent to the endorsement of their appointment by the Commission at the regular session following the session of the subsidiary body at which they were elected.

6. For the functions of the bureau of each subsidiary body, Rule VIII will apply mutatis mutandis. In addition, in case of functions to be performed by the bureau of each subsidiary body in support of their functioning, there will be close coordination with and reporting to the Executive Secretary.

7. Each subsidiary body will define its priority actions, advice and work programme that shall be submitted to the Commission for adoption at the regular session.

Rule XI – Specific mechanisms for the Black Sea region

1. In order to ensure the adequate implementation of the specific mechanisms referred to in Article 9.1 of the Agreement, a subregional Working Group for the Black Sea region shall be established. The Working Group shall endeavour to ensure the participation of all Black Sea States in decisions related to fisheries management. In particular, it shall:

- (a) examine fisheries and aquaculture related issues of relevance for the Black Sea region, including the status and trends of living marine resources, and, on the basis of the guidance provided by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries and the Advisory Committee on Aquaculture, accordingly formulate advice on these issues.**
- b) facilitate exchange of scientific data and information between Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties and relevant non-Contracting Parties and promote cooperation in the fight against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Black Sea region;**
- (c) undertake any other functions or responsibilities as may be conferred by the Commission.**

2. The activities of the Working Group of the Black Sea will be reviewed at the regular session of the Commission.

Rule ~~XI~~ XII – Budget and finance

1. Any estimates of expenditures to be covered by the general budget of the Organization shall be submitted by the Executive Secretary to the Commission for approval. Once approved as part of the general budget of the Organization **and** without prejudice to the relevant rules of the Organization and the decisions of its Governing Bodies, they will constitute the limits within which funds may be committed for purposes approved by the Conference of ~~FAO~~.

2. The Commission shall determine the extent to which travel expenditures incurred by the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission and of any subsidiary bodies, in connection with their functions, may be covered by the autonomous budget of the Commission.

3. Subject to Article ~~IX~~ **11** of the Agreement, any budgetary or financial matters relative to the autonomous budget of the Commission shall be dealt with in accordance with the Financial Regulations. ~~of the Commission.~~

Rule XII XIII – Participation by Observers

1. The Director-General or a representative of his/her designation, shall have the right to participate without vote in all sessions of the Commission and any of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission.

~~1. Any Member or Associate Member of FAO that is not a Member of the Commission may, upon its request, be invited as an observer at sessions of the Commission, its Committees and its subsidiary bodies.~~

~~2. States which, while not Members of the Commission nor Members or Associate Members of FAO, are Members of the United Nations, any of its Specialized Agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency may, upon request and subject to the concurrence of the Commission through its Chairperson, and to the provisions relating to the granting of observer status to nations adopted by the Conference of FAO, be invited to attend sessions of the Commission, its Committees and its subsidiary bodies as observers.~~

2. The Commission may invite International governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to participate as observers, upon request having special competence in the field of activity of the Commission that wish to attend any regular session of the Commission, including its Committees and or its subsidiary bodies, as observers, to attend such of its meetings as the Commission may specify shall give advance notification to the Executive Secretary, at a time as may be specified by the Executive Secretary or the Commission, of their wish to be invited.

~~4.3. Unless the Commission expressly determines otherwise, observers may attend the plenary meetings sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and participate in the discussions at any committee and subsidiary body sessions which they may be invited to attend upon request. Observers may be invited to submit memoranda and deliver oral statements but in no case will they be entitled to vote.~~

4. The Commission may invite consultants or experts, in their individual capacity, to attend the regular sessions or participate in the work of the Commission, and its subsidiary bodies.

Rule XIV – Criteria for attaining the status of Cooperating non-Contracting Party

1. Any such non-Contracting Party that seeks to be accorded the status of a cooperating non-Contracting Party in accordance with Article 18 of the Agreement shall apply to the Executive Secretary no later than ninety days in advance of the regular session of the Commission where the application shall be considered.

2. Non-Contracting Parties requesting the status of a Cooperating non-Contracting Party shall provide the following information in order to have this status considered by the Commission:

- (a) where available, data on its historical fishing activities in the Area of Application;**
- (b) all the data that Contracting Parties have to submit based on recommendations adopted in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement, where applicable; and**
- (c) information on any research programmes they may have conducted in the Area of Application and the information and the results of their researches.**

3. An applicant for Cooperating non-Contracting Party status shall also confirm its commitment to comply with recommendations adopted in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement and shall inform the Commission of the actions it takes to ensure such compliance.

4. Cooperating non-Contracting Party status shall be annually reviewed and renewed, unless revoked by the Commission due to non-compliance with recommendations adopted in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement. In reviewing the Cooperating non-Contracting

Party status, the Commission shall also indicate whether it considers full membership, instead of Cooperating non-Contracting Party status, to be advisable.

Rule XIII XV – Reports, recommendations, resolutions and decisions

1. At each session, the Commission shall approve a report embodying its views, recommendations, resolutions and decisions, including, when requested, a statement of minority views. The report shall be made available on the website of the Commission.

~~32. Resolution and r~~**Recommendations, resolutions and decisions adopted by the Commission** having policy programme or financial implications for the Organization shall be brought by the Director-General to the attention of the Conference through the Council for action.

~~23. Subject to the provisions of Article V 13 of the GFCM Agreement, the conclusions, resolution and recommendations,~~ **resolutions and decisions** adopted by the Commission shall be transmitted to the Director-General at the end of the session. The Executive Secretary shall, on behalf of the Chairperson, circulate them to ~~Members~~ **Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, relevant non-Contracting Parties, nations, international organizations and observers, including those that** were represented at the session, **and such others as the Commission may direct from time to time.** Similarly, these documents may be made available to other Members and Associate Members of the Organization for their information, as appropriate

~~4. Subject to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Chairperson may request Members of the Commission to supply information on action taken on the basis of the recommendations made by the Commission.~~

~~5. The Commission may adopt recommendations for action by Members on any matters pertaining to the functions covered by Article III of the Agreement.~~

~~Recommendations adopted under Article V of the Agreement shall be governed by the provisions of that Article.~~

~~6. The Executive Secretary shall receive on behalf of the Commission the replies of the Members in respect of such recommendations and shall prepare a summary and an analysis of such communications for presentation at the next session.~~

Rule XVI – Review Panel

The Commission may, as necessary, convene on an ad hoc basis a Review Panel, set up in accordance with Article 9 of the Agreement, to support the decision-making process. In particular, this panel shall review the advice provided by any subsidiary body and draw its conclusions. The Commission, when deciding to convene the review panel, shall define its composition and methods of work.

Rule XVII – Data collection, processing and exchange

1. To enhance the information base for the conservation and management of living marine resources, as well as non-target and associated or dependent species and the protection of the marine ecosystems in which these resources occur, the Commission shall develop standards, rules and procedures for, *inter alia*:

(a) the collection and timely reporting to the Commission of all relevant data by Contracting Parties and relevant non-Contracting Parties;

(b) the provision of information on catches and other data relevant to the functions of the Commission in such a way as to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities under this paragraph;

(c) the processing of accurate and complete data by the subsidiary bodies of the Commission in order to facilitate effective stock assessment and ensure that the provision of the best scientific advice is enabled;

(d) the security of access to and dissemination of data while maintaining confidentiality;

(e) the exchange of data concerning vessels engaged in IUU fishing and, as appropriate, concerning the beneficial ownership of such vessels, among Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties to the Commission, among other regional fisheries management organizations and among other relevant organizations, with a view to consolidating such information; and

(f) the regular assessment through the Compliance Committee of the compliance by Contracting Parties with data collection and exchange requirements and the mechanisms for addressing any non-compliance identified in such audits.

2. The Commission shall identify and use, through the Secretariat, suitable data communication protocols, Information Technology standards, tools, licensing schemes and systems that will be employed in support of the abovementioned activities, in line with the need to enhance communication, flexibility, cost-efficiency, visibility and dissemination of its work.

Rule XVIII – Procedures for the Committee for the Settlement of Disputes

1. In accordance with Article 19.2 of the Agreement, a committee shall be established when a Contracting Party notifies, through the Executive Secretary, another Contracting Party of its intention to refer a matter concerning the interpretation or application of the Agreement for the settlement of a dispute. The notification shall be accompanied by a full description of the matter as well as the grounds relied upon.

2. The other Contracting Party shall, within fifteen days, decide whether to accept or disagree to submit the dispute to the committee. In the event that the other Contracting Party accepts, the decision shall be communicated to the Contracting Party that notified its intention and to the Executive Secretary.

3. The Executive Secretary shall inform all Contracting Parties of the establishment of the committee and promptly transmit a copy of the notification with the documents attached to it .

4. Each party to the dispute shall appoint one representative and inform the Executive Secretary of that appointment no later than fifteen days after the communication of the establishment of the committee by the Executive Secretary. The representatives appointed by the parties to the dispute shall be experts with competence in legal, scientific or technical aspects concerning the Agreement, and with relevant qualifications and experience.

5. As soon as the representatives are nominated, the Executive Secretary shall record the constitution of the committee and inform all Contracting Parties accordingly.

6. Any other Contracting Party, having the same interests as one of the parties to the dispute, may become a party to the dispute by a notification to the parties involved and to the Executive Secretary within fifteen days after receiving the notification pursuant to paragraph 3 of this Rule, and provided that the other parties already involved and having the same interests agree.

7. In the event that two or more Contracting Parties jointly make a notification pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Rule or one or more Contracting Parties become parties to the dispute pursuant to paragraph 6 of this Rule, the parties shall each designate one delegate for the official contacts during the work of the committee.

8. The committee may adopt such rules of procedures as it deems necessary for effective and expeditious proceedings, including decisions on dates and venues of hearings and on the methods of work it will follow, and shall inform the Executive Secretary accordingly. Any

Contracting Party may, upon notification to the committee, attend any hearings, and make written or oral submissions.

9. Unless the parties to the dispute agree on a later date, the committee shall deliver its findings within ninety days from the date of its constitution. The committee shall seek to resolve the dispute by consensus. If this is not possible, the committee shall agree by a majority vote of its members, none of whom may abstain from voting.

10. The findings of the committee shall be confined to the subject matter of the dispute and set out the reasons on which they are based. The Executive Secretary shall promptly communicate these findings to all Contracting Parties.

11. The costs of the committee shall be borne by the parties to the dispute in equal parts.

Rule XIX – Measures to resolve situations of non-compliance

1. If the Commission determines through the Compliance Committee that a Contracting Party or a Cooperating non-Contracting Party has been in prolonged and unjustified non-compliance with recommendations adopted in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement, to the extent that it undermines their effectiveness, or that a non-Contracting Party has systematically engaged in activities which undermine the effectiveness of such recommendations and adversely affect the objective of the Agreement, it may take the following measures to resolve the situation of non-compliance:

(a) appropriate corrective measures towards the fulfilment by Contracting Parties or Cooperating non-Contracting Parties of the implementation of recommendations adopted in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement, pursuant to Article 14 of the Agreement, as stated below:

- technical assistance and capacity building programmes to address the main problems of the relevant Contracting Party or Cooperating non-Contracting Party;

- derogations to the implementation of given recommendations, subject to the adoption of a multiannual process that shall identify remedies to non-compliance applying to relevant Contracting Parties and Cooperating non Contracting Parties to ensure its full implementation;

(b) non-discriminatory market-related measures against Cooperating non-Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties, consistent with international law, to monitor transshipment, landings and trade with a view of preventing, deterring and eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing including, where appropriate, catch documentation schemes.

Rule XXIV ~~XX~~ – Amendments to the Agreement

1. Proposals for the amendment of the Agreement pursuant to Article ~~XII-22~~ of the Agreement may be made acting on the proposal by the Commission at a regular or extraordinary session or by any ~~Member~~ Contracting Party in a communication addressed to the Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary shall transmit to all ~~Members~~ Contracting Parties and to the Director-General a copy of such proposals for amendment immediately upon their receipt.

2. No action on a proposal for the amendment of the Agreement shall be taken by the Commission at any session, unless it has been included in the provisional agenda of the session.

Rule ~~XXV~~ XXI – Suspension and amendment of the Rules

1. Subject to the provisions of the Agreement, any of the foregoing Rules, other than Rules IV, V, ~~XIV paragraph 2, and XVI XI, XII,~~ XX.2, and XXII, may be suspended on the motion of any delegation by a majority of the votes cast at any regular session ~~plenary meeting~~ of the Commission,

provided that **an** announcement is made at a **regular session** of the Commission and copies of the proposal for suspension have been distributed to the delegations not less than forty-eight hours before the **session** at which action is to be taken.

2. Amendments of, or additions to, these Rules may be adopted on the motion of any delegation by a two-thirds majority of the ~~Members~~ **Contracting Parties of the Commission**, at ~~any plenary meeting sessions~~ of the Commission, provided an announcement is made at ~~a plenary meeting~~ **that session** and copies of the proposal for the amendment or addition have been distributed to delegations not less than twenty-four hours before the session at which action is to be taken.

3. Any amendments to Rule ~~XVI-XXII~~ which may be adopted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of this Rule shall not become effective until the next session of the Commission.

4. Any new rule adopted by the Organization which may require a timely amendment of these Rules will be brought to the attention of the Commission.

Rule ~~XVI~~ XXII – ~~Official~~ Languages of the Commission

1. The official languages of the Commission shall be ~~such languages of the Organization as the Commission itself may decide~~ **Arabic, English, French and Spanish. These languages shall all be used at the regular and extraordinary sessions of the Commission.**

~~2. The delegations may on use using any one or more of these languages~~ **At the sessions of technical subsidiary bodies of the Commission and for their reports and communications more flexible and cost-effective arrangements could be foreseen in relation to the use of the languages of the Commission.**

~~23. During the meetings~~ **Interpretation in one or more of the official languages during meetings will be provided ensured by the Secretariat and funded through the autonomous budget or extra-budgetary funds. when requested by one delegates present.**

~~34. Publications of~~ **Reports and communications shall be in the languages agreed by the Commission in which they are submitted and, when required by the Commission, abstracts in translation may be published.**

Reference framework for the subsidiary bodies**Rule XI: The Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries**

1. There shall be established a Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries which shall be responsible for ~~which shall provide~~ scientific, social and economic information, data, and advice relating to the work of the Commission, as well as for supporting the implementation of multiannual management plans, taking into account a subregional approach.

~~(a) The Committee shall be open to all Members of the Commission. Each Member of the Commission may designate a member of the Committee and a member may be accompanied by experts.~~

2. The Committee shall:

(a) Collect and assess information provided by ~~Members~~ all parties, relevant fisheries organizations, institutions or programmes on catches, fishing effort, fleet capacity and other data relevant to the conservation and management of fisheries;

(b) Assess the status and trends of relevant populations of living marine resources, ecosystems and fisheries-related human components, using the appropriate indicators and in relation to agreed biological and/or management reference points;

~~(b) The Committee may establish working groups to analyze data and advise the Committee of the state of shared and straddling resources;~~

~~(c) The Committee shall~~ Provide independent advice on a technical and scientific basis for decisions concerning fisheries conservation and management, to facilitate the adoption of recommendations concerning the sustainable management of fisheries and ecosystems at the regional and subregional levels, including on relevant biological, environmental, social and economic aspects, as well as on issues associated with the ecosystem approach to fisheries, the impact of IUU fishing on populations and ecosystems, and the assessment of biological and ecological implications under different management scenarios; and in particular it shall: (ii) formulate advice to the Commission on the conservation and management of fisheries;

(d) If required, submit advice and reports to the Review Panel established pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the GFCM XVI;

~~(e) identify~~ Keep abreast of cooperative scientific and technical research projects and programmes of interest to the Committee; and ~~coordinate their implementation;~~

(f) Undertake any other functions or responsibilities as may be conferred on it by the Commission.

~~Members have an obligation to provide information on catches and other data relevant to the functions of the Committee in such a way as to enable the Committee to fulfil its responsibilities under this paragraph.~~

Rule XII: The Scientific Advisory Committee on Aquaculture

1. There shall be established a ~~Scientific Advisory~~ Committee on Aquaculture ~~(CAQ) which~~ which shall be responsible for providing technical advice related to the work of the Commission ~~monitor trends and,~~ as well as to promote the sustainable development and responsible management of marine, brackish and inland ~~and brackish water~~ aquaculture ~~in the region~~ in the Area of Application in a way that is consistent with an ecosystem approach to aquaculture and that takes into account the specific regional, subregional and local characteristics.

2. The Committee shall, in particular: ~~The Committee:~~

~~(b) shall be open to all Members of the Commission. Each Member of the Commission may designate a Member of the Committee, and a member may be accompanied by experts;~~

(a) monitor sustainable aquaculture development, following its progress and trends including through the identification, use and regular update of environmental, economic and social indicators;

~~(a) (b) collect and~~ assess information **and data with regard to production statistics, market data, post harvesting, culture systems, technologies used, farmed species, environmental and aquatic animal health issues, as well as any additional information considered by the Commission to be relevant and useful. Such data and information shall be** provided by all parties, relevant **aquaculture actors, the aquaculture multi-stakeholder platform** ~~or~~ **and other** programmes, ~~or~~ and **shall be maintained in** related databases;

~~including relevant socio-economic, environmental, biotic and abiotic indicators;~~

~~promote the formulation of common standards and guidelines for the Commission, on sustainable~~

~~(c) may establish set up working groups to analyse scientific and technical data and information and to advise the Committee on issues related to sustainable development of aquaculture (such as markets, environmental interactions, health, social, and other relevant issues) and the integration of marine aquaculture into coastal zone management, and ensure their coordination through; a Coordinating Meeting of the Working Groups (CMWG);~~

~~(d) shall provide independent advice on a technical, socio-economic, legal and environmental bases~~ **and scientific basis to facilitate the adoption of recommendations pursuant to Article 8(b) of the GFCM Agreement concerning the sustainable development of aquaculture with regard to biological, environmental, social and economic issues;** ~~for common standards, norms and guidelines and management measures for consideration by the Commission;~~

(d) submit advice and reports to the Review Panel, established pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the GFCM, if required;

(e) identify and promote the development and implementation of cooperative scientific and technical research projects and programmes; and

~~(f) carry out other duties, any other functions or responsibilities related to aquaculture promotion as may be conferred on it by the Commission.~~

~~(e) Members have an obligation to provide information on production and other data relevant to the functions of the Committee in such a way as to enable the Committee to fulfil its responsibilities under this paragraph.~~

Rule XIII: The Compliance Committee

1. There shall be established a Compliance Committee that will meet during the annual Commission Session and will be entrusted with the following functions **which shall, in particular:**

~~(a) review assess, on the basis of all available information,~~ compliance with ~~conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission and make such recommendations to the Commission as may be necessary to ensure their effectiveness~~ **by Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties and relevant non-Contracting Parties with recommendations adopted by the Commission in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement;**

~~(b) review the implementation of measures on monitoring, control, surveillance, and enforcement adopted by the Commission and make such recommendations to the Commission as may be necessary to ensure their effectiveness;~~

(b) request clarifications and express concern to Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties ~~(d) monitor, review and analyze information pertaining to the activities of Non-Contracting Parties and their vessels which undermine the~~

~~objectives of the Agreement including, in particular, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and recommend actions to be taken by the Commission to discourage such activities~~ **in cases of non-compliance, prima facie, with recommendations adopted by the Commission in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement;**

(c) submit to the attention of the Commission cases in which Contracting Parties or Cooperating non-Contracting Parties are not compliant with recommendations adopted by the Commission in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement, or cases in which activities by non-Contracting Parties undermine the effectiveness of such recommendations and adversely affecting the objective of the Agreement, in order to facilitate their identification as foreseen by the applicable recommendation concerning the identification of non-compliance ;

(d) provide additional information, as it considers appropriate or as may be requested by the Commission, relating to the implementation and compliance with recommendations adopted by the Commission in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement, as well as with the provisions of the Agreement;

(e) provide independent advice on an institutional and legal basis and submit reports ~~define, develop and make recommendations to the Commission concerning the phased development and implementation of the GFCM Control and Inspection scheme~~ **to facilitate the adoption of recommendations in accordance with Article 8(b) of the Agreement, including in connection with aspects related to monitoring, control and surveillance, and technical assistance and capacity building activities to support these aspects;**

(f) undertake other functions or responsibilities as may be conferred on it by ~~perform such other tasks as directed~~ the Commission.

Rule XIV: The Committee on Administration and Finance

1. There shall be established a Committee on Administration and Finance which shall, in particular:

~~The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),~~

~~ESTABLISHES, in accordance with Article VII (1) of the Agreement creating the GFCM, a Committee of Administration and Finance (CAF).~~

~~The functions of the Committee on Administration and Finance shall be:~~

(a) review administrative matters relating to the Executive Secretary and his/her staff and make appropriate recommendations to the Commission;

~~(b) review compliance with the rules of procedures and financial rules~~ **oversee the correct application of the Rules and the Financial Regulations;**

~~(c) review the implementation of the~~ **annual programme of work and the** budget ~~adopted at the previous session of the Commission,~~ **as adopted at its previous session** and;

~~(d) analyse and make recommendations~~ **to the Commission** on the draft **programme of work** and budget **as proposed for adoption at** ~~the to be adopted at the current~~ **the** session of the Commission; and

(e) submit to the Commission proposals concerning the need, as appropriate, for the amendment of the Rules and the Financial Regulations; and

(f) undertake other functions or responsibilities as may be conferred on it ~~perform such other administration and financial matters as may be referred to it by the Commission.~~

~~The Committee of Administration and Finance shall meet before the annual Commission session.~~

Requirements for the selection, appointment and term of office of the Executive Secretary

Part I - Qualifications and benefits

1. The following qualifications shall be required for the post of Executive Secretary, unless otherwise decided by the Commission:

(a) The candidate should hold a university degree, preferably at post-graduate level, in fisheries biology, fisheries science, fisheries economics, administration, law or related fields. He/she should have at least ten years of experience in fisheries management and policy formulation, and preferably in bilateral and international relations, including knowledge of regional fisheries management organizations. He/she should have proven ability to exercise a high degree of professional initiative. The incumbent should be able to prepare budgets and documents and organize international meetings. He/she should have working knowledge (level C) of two of the following official languages of the Commission: Arabic, English, French or Spanish. Knowledge, even limited, of one of the other cited languages will be considered an additional asset.

(b) Other essential qualifications include competence in the selection of staff; demonstrated ability to conduct professional oversight in appropriate fields, and familiarity with word processing, spreadsheets and database management systems.

(c) Desirable requirements include a high degree of adaptability and the ability to cooperate effectively with people of different nationalities, cultures, social origins and educational levels.

(d) The age of the candidates should allow him/her to perform a full term of five years prior to attaining the age set by the Organization for required retirement.

(e) The post of Executive Secretary will be graded at the D-1 level based on the United Nations salary scale for professional and higher categories. He/she is appointed under the terms of the Organization Staff Regulations and the Organization Staff Rules, is a member of the Organization staff and as such entitled to benefits including a variable element for post adjustment, pension contributions and health insurance.

Part II – Procedure for the selection of the Executive Secretary

2. The procedure, for the selection of the Executive Secretary, shall be as follows:

(a) The Commission shall agree to a text for the vacancy announcement, including the required qualifications and the job description for the post of Executive Secretary.

(b) The Director-General shall post the vacancy announcement on the Organization and GFCM websites and **also publicize it** elsewhere, as appropriate, in accordance with guidelines **as may be agreed upon by the** Commission.

(c) The closing date for applications shall be six weeks from the date of announcement of the vacancy notice.

(d) A Selection Committee shall be established to review the applications and rank candidates. It shall comprise:

- (i) the Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission;
- (ii) the Chairperson of the Committee on Administration and Finance;
- (iii) the Chairperson of the Compliance Committee;
- (iv) two representatives of the Director-General;

- (v) one representative from EU Member States; and
 - (vi) one representative from non EU Member States; and
 - (vii) other member(s) **at the discretion of** the Commission.
- (e) The Selection Committee shall meet within four weeks of the date of closure of the receipt of applications, and shall, with the assistance of the Organization Secretariat identify a maximum of 20 candidates that meet or exceed the required qualifications for the post.
- (f) The Executive Secretary shall communicate to the Contracting Parties a list of all applicants and shall identify those which have been selected as candidates in accordance with these procedures.
- (g) Within four weeks of receipt of the communication from the Executive Secretary under paragraph f, each Contracting Party shall rank five candidates by order of preference, taking into account the required qualifications set out in Part I of this Appendix, on a scale of one (lowest) to five (highest), and shall notify the Secretariat of such designation.
- (h) The Selection Committee shall compile the rankings and notify the Contracting Parties the names and relevant information on the five candidates that scored the highest number of points.
- (i) The Chairperson shall invite the five candidates designated pursuant to paragraph h to be interviewed at **the** regular or extraordinary session of the Commission, **as determined by** the Commission.
- (j) The Chairperson shall preside over the interviews, which shall be conducted at the session by the representatives **of the Contracting Parties** designated in accordance with Article 6 of the Agreement. Interpretation in the languages of the Organization shall be made available.
- (k) The Chairperson, with the approval of the **representatives of the** Contracting Parties, shall prepare five questions to be used as a basis for the interview.
- (l) The interview of each candidate shall have a maximum duration of 50 minutes.
3. The voting for the Executive Secretary shall take place at the same session at which the interviews were conducted, and shall proceed as follows:
- (a) Balloting shall take place as follows until one candidate attains the required majority of more than half **of** the votes cast:
- (i) A first ballot shall be held for all five candidates. The two candidates receiving the least votes shall be eliminated from the selection process.
 - (ii) A second ballot shall be held for the remaining three candidates. The candidate receiving the least votes shall be eliminated.
 - (iii) A third ballot shall be held between the remaining two candidates. The candidate receiving the most votes shall be selected.
- (b) If, during the course of a ballot, two candidates receive the same number of votes, a separate round of voting shall be held to eliminate one candidate.
- (c) In accordance with Rule IX(8) of these Rules, matters not specifically provided for in this procedure are governed, *mutatis mutandis*, by the provisions of Article XII of the General Rules of the Organization.

Part III – Appointment

4. The Chairperson shall transmit the name of the candidate selected by the Commission in accordance with the above procedures to the Director-General for appointment.

Part IV – Term of office

5. Entry **into** duty by the appointee should, to the extent possible, be achieved as soon as possible after his/her selection and, in any case, within a maximum period of four months.
6. The Executive Secretary shall be appointed for a period of five years and may be reselected for a further consecutive term of five years. At the third regular session following **the** regular session of the Commission during which the Executive Secretary was selected, or at the fourth regular session following the selection of the Executive Secretary (in the case **that** selection took place at an extraordinary session of the Commission), selection of the next Executive Secretary should be placed on the Commission's agenda. The Commission shall decide the necessary arrangements for the next selection of Executive Secretary, in accordance with the procedure in place.

Amended financial regulations of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean¹

Regulation I – Applicability

1. These Regulations shall govern the financial administration of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, hereafter “the Commission”, **with** respect **to** all activities financed by the autonomous budget referred to in **Article 11**, paragraphs 1, 2 and **3**, of the Agreement for the Establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, hereafter “the Agreement”.
2. The Financial Regulations and rules of the Organization shall apply to the activities of the Commission for all matters not covered by these Regulations, with particular reference to those provided for and financed by the budget of the Organization.

Regulation II – The financial period

1. The financial period shall be one calendar year, **within the context of a triennial cycle, in accordance with Article 11, paragraph 1, of the Agreement.**
2. **Each year the Executive Secretary shall present to the Commission a three-year proposal, with a fixed budget for the first two years and a tentative budget for the third year, to be finalized or readjusted the following year, taking into consideration the annual work plan of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. Contributions would be paid annually by the Contracting Parties consistent with the adopted budget.**

Regulation III – The autonomous budget

1. The estimates for the autonomous budget **within the context of a triennial cycle** shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary of the Commission and shall be circulated to the Contracting Parties not less than 60 days before each regular session.
2. The estimates of the autonomous budget shall cover **expected** income and expenditures for the financial period to which they relate and shall be presented in United States dollars.
3. The estimates for the autonomous budget shall be presented **by on-a-chapters basis**, and ~~divided into~~ sub-chapters as appropriate. They shall reflect the programme of work for the financial period and shall include **additional** information, annexes or explanatory statements as may be requested by the Commission.
4. The autonomous budget shall **be comprised of:**
 - (a) the autonomous budget referred to in paragraph 5 of this Regulation **which consists of relating to the regular contributions of Contracting Parties payable under Article 11, paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4, of the Agreement and covers expenditures chargeable to the budget of the Commission under Article 12, paragraphs 4, 5 and 6, of the Agreement.** The budget may reflect in an appropriate manner expenditures borne by the Organization under **Article 12, paragraph 5** of the Agreement; **and**

¹ Note to the reader. In this document:

- (i) text in normal font comes from the GFCM Financial Regulations currently in force. It is proposed to retain it;
- (ii) text which appears in ~~strike through~~ is found in the GFCM Financial Regulations currently in force. It is proposed to delete it;
- (iii) text which appears in **bold and underlined** is new as opposed to the GFCM Financial Regulations currently in force. It is proposed to include it.

(b) the special budgets relating to funds made available **to support the work programme of the Commission** during the financial period from donations and other forms of assistance received from organizations, individuals and other sources under **Article 11, paragraph 5**, of the Agreement.

5. The autonomous budget for the financial period shall consist of provisions for:

(a) administrative expenditures **relating to staff and functioning**, ~~including an amount to cover the Organization's costs equal to 4.5% of the autonomous budget of the Commission;~~

(b) expenditures for **strategic** activities of the Commission. Estimates under this chapter may be presented in a single total only, but detailed estimates for each particular activity will be prepared and approved as "supplementary **information**" to the budget; ~~and~~

(c) ~~contingencies:~~ **hospitality and miscellaneous at a level of 1% of the adopted budget;**

(d) an additional 4.5% FAO Project Servicing Cost applied to all expenditures;

6. The Commission authorizes, on an exceptional basis, a budget flexibility tantamount to an increase of 2% of the total allocations, or an increase of a different amount, as may be determined. This flexibility would account for variations in exchange rates or for increased costs of activities endorsed by the Commission as a result of contingency costs or other unforeseen circumstances of a limited impact. The Executive Secretary shall inform the Commission without delay and ask it to authorize the budget flexibility.

76. The autonomous budget shall be adopted by the Commission with amendments as **may be decided by** the Commission.

87. Special budgets may be adopted by the Commission in exceptional circumstances, as appropriate.

98. The autonomous budget of the Commission shall be submitted to the Finance Committee of the Organization for its information.

Regulation IV – Appropriations

1. After the autonomous budget has been adopted, the appropriations therein shall constitute the authorization for the Executive Secretary to incur obligations and make payments for the purposes for which the appropriations were adopted and up to the amounts so adopted.

2. In cases of emergency, **as determined by the Bureau, the Executive** Secretary is authorized to accept additional contributions from a Contracting Party or Contracting Parties or **accept additional** grants from other sources. **In such cases, the Executive Secretary is authorized to** incur expenditures against **these funds** for **the** emergency actions for which such contributions or grants were specifically provided. Such contributions or grants and expenditures related thereto will be reported in detail to the next session of the Commission.

3. Any unliquidated **prior**-year obligation shall be cancelled or, where an obligation remains a valid charge, transferred against current appropriations.

4. Transfers between chapters may be effected by the Commission on the recommendation of the Executive Secretary.

Regulation V – Provision of funds

~~1. The appropriations of the autonomous budget shall be financed by contributions from Contracting Parties determined and payable in accordance with Article IX, paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of the Agreement. Pending receipt of annual contributions, the Executive Secretary is authorized to finance budgeted expenditures from the uncommitted balance of the autonomous budget.~~

21. Before the beginning of each calendar year the Executive Secretary shall inform the Contracting Parties of their obligations **with** respect **to** annual contributions to the autonomous budget.

~~32.~~ Contributions shall be due and payable in full within 30 days of the receipt of the communication of the Executive Secretary referred to in Regulation V.1 above, or as of the first day of the calendar year to which they relate, whichever is later. As of 1 January of the following calendar year, the unpaid balance of such contributions shall be considered to be one year in arrears.

~~43.~~ The annual contributions to the autonomous budget shall be assessed in United States dollars and shall be calculated in accordance with the scheme annexed to these Regulations ~~and forming an integral part thereof~~. The contributions shall be paid in United States dollars or Euros, on the basis of the exchange rate prevailing at the time of assessment of the annual contributions, as approved by the Commission. Should a Contracting Party pay its contribution in a currency other than the United States dollar or Euro, it will be the responsibility of that Contracting Party to ensure the free convertibility of that currency into United States dollars or Euros. The exchange rate applicable to any payment in a currency other than the United States dollars or Euros shall be the market rate of the United States dollar to the currency of payment on the first business day in January of the calendar year in which the contribution is due, or the rate in effect in the day the payment is made, whichever is higher.

~~54.~~ Any new ~~Member~~ **Contracting Party** ~~of the Commission~~ shall pay a contribution to the autonomous budget in accordance with the provisions of **Article 11 paragraphs 1, 2 and 3** of the Agreement for the financial period in which the membership becomes effective. Such contribution shall begin with the quarter in which the membership is acquired.

5. The appropriations of the autonomous budget shall be financed by contributions from Contracting Parties determined and payable in accordance with Article 11, paragraphs 1, 2 and 4, of the Agreement. Pending receipt of annual contributions, the Executive Secretary is authorized to finance budgeted expenditures from the uncommitted balance of the autonomous budget.

Regulation VI – Funds

1. All contributions, donations and other forms of assistance received shall be placed in a Trust Fund administered by the Director-General **of the Organization** in conformity with the Financial Regulations of the Organization.

2. With respect to the Trust Fund referred to in Regulation VI.1, the Organization shall maintain **the following** accounts:

(a) a general account to which shall be credited receipts of all contributions paid under **Article 11, paragraph 2 and 3**, of the Agreement and from which shall be met all expenditures chargeable against the sums allocated to the autonomous budget; ~~and~~

(b) additional accounts, as may be necessary, to which shall be credited the additional contributions under Regulation IV.2 and from which all relevant expenditures shall be met.

3. A special account for contributions relating to the participation fund established under Regulation VIII will be maintained, as appropriate, and in line with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Organization.

Regulation VII – Amendment

1. These Regulations may be amended by the Commission, by a two-thirds majority of the Contracting Parties, in accordance with ~~Article II, paragraph 13~~ **Article 8(h)** of the Agreement **and pursuant to the procedure provided for in Rule XXI of the Rules of Procedure.**

2. Any new rule adopted by the Organization which may require a timely amendment of these Regulations will be brought to the attention of the Commission.

Regulation VIII – Participation fund

1. The Commission may establish, according with the Organization's Financial Regulations and rules, a fund in order to facilitate participation in sessions of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies, according to eligibility criteria to be defined.

2. The Commission, when establishing the participation fund, will provide for its composition which will include:

a) a percentage of the autonomous budget (2.5%) adopted for the financial period by the Commission at its regular session;

b) a minimum percentage of 2.5% of all voluntary contributions received from Contracting Parties, without prejudice to the conditions regulating grants between Contracting Parties and the Commission and depending on negotiations with the Contracting Party concerned;

c) any other voluntary contribution made with a view to replenish the fund.

APPENDIX 5 (2)/Annex 1**Scheme for the calculation of contributions**

The modalities for determining the scale of contribution are calculated in accordance with the following formula.

Factors for calculation which should be applicable to the GFCM autonomous budget once the amended Agreement has entered into force:

Membership: a fixed proportion of the budget, equally shared amongst Contracting Parties;

Wealth component: the wealth of the Contracting Party; and

Catch component: the total capture fishery and aquaculture production of the Contracting Party in the area of application.

Weight to be given to each factor (as percentage of total autonomous budget):

Membership: 10 percent

Wealth component: 35 percent

Catch component: 55 percent

Measurement of the factors:

Membership: all Contracting Parties

Wealth component: according to per caput GDP (measured in US \$ as published by the World Bank); Members falling into four categories: below US\$ 1 000; between US\$ 1 000 and US\$ 9 999; between US\$ 10 000 and US\$ 29 999 and US\$ 30 000 and above. The first category is exempt from the wealth component. The second pays one share; the third pays 10 shares, and the fourth category pays 20 shares. Exceptions are made for countries with a total GDP below US\$ 5 thousand million (1997) to which a GDP category one step below is applied. Some countries are brought down to the first category and, as a result, are exempt from the wealth component (as long as their annual GDP remains below US\$ 5 thousand million).

Catch component: The catch/production figures to be used are those published by FAO in the STATLANT 37A DATABASE. A three-year average is calculated using the period ending two years prior to that for which the budget will apply. Due to different values of small pelagic and other species, the "GFCM catch" for the purpose of determining the scale of contribution is calculated by applying a factor of 4 to all fish produced by Contracting Parties in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea, except for small pelagics.

**Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/1
establishing further precautionary and emergency measures in 2016 for small pelagic stocks in
the Adriatic Sea (GSA 17 and GSA 18)**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter the “GFCM”),

RECALLING that the objectives of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean are ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING that, according to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereafter the “FAO”), States should widely apply the precautionary approach to the conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, and highlighting besides that the lack of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/27/2002/1 on the management of selected demersal and small pelagic species and, notably, Article 2 therein;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/30/2006/1 on the management of certain fisheries exploiting demersal and small pelagic and, notably, Article 2 and 3 therein;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1 on a multiannual management plan for fisheries on small pelagic stocks in the GFCM GSA 17 (northern Adriatic Sea) and on transitional conservation measures for fisheries on small pelagic stocks in GSA 18 (southern Adriatic Sea);

CONSIDERING Recommendation GFCM/38/2014/1 amending Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1 and on precautionary and emergency measures for 2015 on small pelagic stocks in the GFCM GSA 17;

NOTING that for anchovy in GSA 17 the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee for fisheries (hereafter the “SAC”) at its seventeenth session (FAO headquarters, March 2015) has considered the status of the stock as overexploited and in overexploitation for two consecutive years and that it recently advised to decrease fishing mortality immediately;

NOTING that the latest stock assessment of anchovy indicates a declining trend in spawning stock biomass (SSB) since 2005;

NOTING ALSO that for sardine in GSA 17 the SAC has considered the status of the stock in overexploitation and advised to decrease its fishing mortality;

RECALLING that the SAC has considered that the stocks of anchovy and sardine are distributed in GSAs 17 and GSA 18;

NOTING that, due to instability of the stock assessment model, the SAC recommended a comprehensive revision of the input data, including the reference points under Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1;

CONSIDERING that, pending the revision of input data and reference points, as for 2015, additional measures for 2016 have to be taken to reduce fishing mortality for anchovy and sardine;

NOTING that since temporal restrictions are considered to have a beneficial effect on fisheries, a closed period during the spawning season of anchovy in the Adriatic Sea shall be applied;

NOTING that hydroacoustic surveys have the potential of providing latest biomass estimates and their results can support management decisions;

NOTING that, under Recommendation GFCM/38/2014/1, a reduction of fishing effort as well as spatio-temporal closures are being applied in 2015 for vessels fishing small pelagic stocks in GSA 17;

ADOPTS in conformity with the applicable relevant provisions of the GFCM Agreement that:

Reduction of fishing mortality in the Adriatic Sea

1. For the year 2016, the Contracting parties and Cooperating non-Contracting parties of the GFCM (hereafter the “CPCs”) whose vessels have been fishing small pelagic stocks in GSA 17 shall reduce the fishing effort established under paragraph 27 of Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1. To this end, by derogation from the provisions of paragraph 27, Part VII, for the year 2016, each fishing vessel targeting anchovy shall not exceed 144 fishing days per year.
2. For the year 2016, in order to protect nursery and spawning areas, the CPCs shall apply spatio-temporal closures of no less than 15 continuous days and up to 30 continuous days for vessels fishing small pelagic stocks in GSA 17 and GSA 18. These closures shall be designated in waters under their jurisdiction and shall take place between 1 April and 31 August.
3. CPCs shall notify to the GFCM Executive Secretary, by 30 November 2015, the closure dates.
4. National control programmes established under paragraph 29 of Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/1 shall be adapted accordingly.

Review of the management plan

5. The SAC shall organise, in 2015, a specific technical meeting to review input data and propose revised targets based on fishing mortality at maximum sustainable yield (MSY) level – or using the exploitation rate as a proxy – and spawning stock biomass, as well as the reference points of the management plan. The SAC shall assist in setting up a joint assessment for both small pelagic stocks covering the Adriatic Sea (GSA 17 and GSA 18).
6. For the purpose of paragraph 5, the SAC shall assess the biological, economic and social implications of implementing several management scenarios with the objective of restoring and maintaining the populations of harvested species above levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield. To this end, the SAC shall also consult its Subcommittee on Economic and Social Sciences (SCESS).
7. The SAC shall propose alternatives to make the results of the hydroacoustic surveys of the previous year available during the first month of the year.
8. Based on the SAC advice, the GFCM shall review, and if necessary adapt, the content of the management plan in 2017.

**Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2
on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries of demersal
stocks in the Strait of Sicily, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual
management plan**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter the “GFCM”),

RECALLING that the objectives of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean are to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

REAFFIRMING the principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereafter the “FAO”) and recalling the precautionary and ecosystem approach to fishery management;

RECALLING the Guidelines on precautionary conservation measures pending the development and adoption by the GFCM of multiannual management plans for relevant fisheries at the subregional level in the GFCM area, as agreed during its thirty-seventh session;

NOTING that the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee (hereafter the “SAC”) has recurrently considered that the assessed demersal stocks were overexploited in the geographical subareas (hereafter “GSAs”) 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16;

CONSIDERING that the state of stocks as assessed by the SAC requires the development and adoption of management measures aimed at ensuring the conservation of demersal stocks in the above subareas with a view to adopting a multiannual plan as soon as possible;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the SAC subregional technical workshop on multiannual management plans that took place in October 2013;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the SAC Follow-up workshop on the implementation of management measures in selected case studies in the Mediterranean that took place in February 2015;

CONSIDERING the socioeconomic importance of fisheries exploiting demersal stocks and the need to ensure their sustainability;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the seventeenth session of the SAC, and in particular those regarding the management of selected fisheries in the Strait of Sicily;

ADOPTS in conformity with the relevant provisions of the GFCM Agreement, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan, that:

PART I

Scope and geographical area of application

1. In order to ensure adequate conservation of demersal stocks, the GFCM Contracting parties and Cooperating non-contracting Parties (hereafter the “CPCs”) shall adopt fisheries management measures or national management plans in GSAs 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 (hereafter the “Strait of Sicily”) as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2.

2. The CPCs shall actively cooperate with a view to establishing, as soon as possible, the necessary requirements for the adoption of a management plan, at the GFCM scale, which should therefore draw on the experience of existing national management plans.

PART II

Technical conservation measures

3. As from the entry into force of this recommendation, deepwater rose shrimp and hake whose size is smaller than the minimum reference conservation size in total length (TL), for fish, or carapace length (CL), for crustaceans, as reported below and measured to the lowest centimetre, shall not be caught, retained on board, transhipped, transferred, stored, sold, displayed or offered for sale:

Deepwater rose shrimp (<i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i>)	20 mm CL
Hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>)	20 cm TL

4. For deepwater rose shrimp, such obligation enters into force no later than 31 December 2016, unless the GFCM decides otherwise.

5. The CPCs shall communicate annually to the GFCM Secretariat the specific modalities they apply under the provisions stipulated in paragraph 3, including landing obligations aiming at avoiding discards which are in force in some CPCs as well as landing inspection modalities when a flexibility scheme is foreseen at the national level.

6. In order to define appropriate spatio-temporal restrictions in view of the sustainable management of the stocks referred to in paragraph 3, the CPS shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat, by 31 December 2015, the spatial restrictions in the waters under their jurisdiction that they apply with a view to protecting spawning and nursery areas for hake and deepwater rose shrimp.

PART III

Fleet management measures

7. Operating bottom trawling vessels targeting demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily shall only be allowed to carry out specific fishing activities if these are indicated in a valid fishing authorization issued by the competent authorities and specifying the technical conditions under which such activities shall be carried out (see Annex 1). Such vessels shall be equipped with a vessel monitoring system (VMS) in accordance with Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7.

8. The CPCs shall maintain an updated register of the above mentioned fishing authorizations. Unless expressly provided for within the GFCM data collection programme, the CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat:

- The list of operating vessels for which such authorization has been delivered for the current or the following years, no later than 30 November each year;
- A report on fishing activities carried out by the vessels referred to in paragraph 7, in an aggregated format, including the following minimum information: number of exploitation days, exploitation area and captures of hake and deepwater rose shrimp, no later than 31 August each year and starting from 31 August 2016;

9. In order to facilitate the exchange of information regarding inspections to be done, the CPCs may communicate with each other their information on the fishing vessels authorized to carry out fishing activities in a given fishery.

10. The CPCs that have introduced, since 2010, fishing capacity reduction measures or fishing effort restrictions, including through the establishment of spatio-temporal closures, shall be encouraged to ensure that such measures, or their effects, are maintained. If no such measure has been taken, the CPCs shall adopt them in their national management plans, by the end of 2015. The SAC shall be invited to formulate advice aiming at improving the efficiency of such measures.

PART IV**National management plans**

11. The CPCs shall ensure that the measures outlined in Parts II and III are integrated in their national management plans.
12. The CPCs shall notify to the GFCM Secretariat, starting from 31 January 2016, the management measures or management plans adopted at the national level. Where appropriate, should these measures be modified, the CPCs shall communicate such modifications by 31 January of the following year.

PART V**Assessment by the SAC**

13. The SAC shall evaluate yearly the effectiveness of the management measures under this recommendation regarding the status of the concerned stocks and of any measure applied under national management frameworks. In addition, the SAC shall formulate an advice on the measures to be implemented in order to achieve the objective of fishing mortality reduction, providing also an analysis of potential socio-economic indices for the concerned fleets based on available information.
14. In conducting the evaluation referred to in paragraph 13, the SAC shall take into consideration the assessment of the implementation of this recommendation performed by the GFCM Compliance Committee.
15. Based on the evaluation referred to in paragraph 13, the SAC shall provide advice on the management measures to be developed with a view to establishing, at GFCM scale, a multiannual management plan for demersal fisheries in the Strait of Sicily, taking into consideration the national measures adopted by the CPCs. This shall be done taking into account the advice expressed by the Compliance Committee as referred to in paragraph 14.
16. The SAC shall perform an assessment and formulate advice on the establishment of fisheries restricted areas considered as spawning or nursery grounds for hake and deepwater rose shrimp. In this respect, it shall also provide advice on fisheries restricted areas that are already part of national management frameworks.

APPENDIX 7/Annex 1

Subject to more detailed provisions under the GFCM data collection programme, the list referred to in Part III shall contain, for each vessel, the following information:

- Name of vessel
- Vessel register number (code assigned by CPCs)
- GFCM registration number (country ISO 3-alpha code + 9 digits, e.g. xxx000000001)
- Port of registration (full name of the port)
- Previous name (if any)
- Previous flag (if any)
- Previous details of deletion from other registers (if any)
- International radio call sign (if any)
- VMS (indicate Y/N)
- Vessel type, length overall and gross tonnage (GT) and/or gross registered tonnage (GRT) and engine power expressed in kW
- Name and address of owner(s), and/or charter and/or operator(s)
- Main target species
- Main gear(s) used for hake and deepwater rose shrimp and fleet segment allocation and operational unit as identified in TASK 1 statistical matrix
- Time period authorized for fishing with bottom trawl or any other gear likely to fish hake and/or deepwater rose shrimp (if any of such authorization)

**Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/3
on the establishment of a set of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter the “GFCM”),

RECALLING that the objectives of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean are; ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development of 2002 and in particular its plan of implementation;

REAFFIRMING the principles of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereafter the “FAO”) and recalling the precautionary and ecosystem approach to fishery management;

REAFFIRMING the GFCM roadmap to fight illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (hereafter “IUU fishing”) in the Black Sea endorsed at the thirty-seventh annual session of the GFCM (Croatia, May 2013);

REAFFIRMING the grave concerns about the continuation of IUU fishing and its detrimental effects upon fish stocks, marine ecosystems and the livelihoods of legitimate fishers, as well as the increasing need for food security;

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

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/32/2008/1 on a regional scheme on port State measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishery activities in the GFCM area;

NOTING that for turbot in GSA 29 the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee (hereafter the “SAC”) has concluded at its seventeenth session in 2015 that the stock is in overfishing and considered as a priority the setting of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU activities together with the adoption of control measures in view of implementing a recovery plan in the near future;

NOTING that, for turbot in GSA 29 the SAC has also concluded at its seventeenth session in 2015 that the setting of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU activities together with the adoption of control measures shall be drafted on the basis of the agreement of the Black Sea riparian countries at the fourth meeting of the GFCM Ad-hoc Working Group on the Black Sea (hereafter the “WGBS”) held in Tbilisi in March 2015;

RECOGNIZING that fishing operations carried out in turbot fisheries shall be consistent with the sustainable exploitation and conservation of the fish species targeted;

RECOGNIZING that measures that could facilitate the fight against IUU fishing for turbot should be a priority in any future management and/or recovery plan;

AIMING to provide a series of elements for the reduction of IUU fishing;

ADOPTS in conformity with the relevant applicable provisions of the GFCM Agreement:

PART I

Scope

1. The Contracting Parties and cooperating non-Contracting Parties of the GFCM (hereafter the “CPCs”) shall adopt as a priority appropriate control measures to evaluate, prevent, deter and, to the extent possible, eliminate IUU fishing for turbot in the Black Sea.

PART II

Definitions

2. For the purposes of this recommendation the following definitions shall apply:
- a) "Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing" or "IUU fishing" means the activities set out in paragraph 3 of the 2001 FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, hereinafter referred to as "IUU fishing";
 - b) "Black Sea" means the GFCM geographical subarea n° 29 as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2;
 - c) "Turbot" means fishes pertaining to the species *Psetta maxima* [(synonym: *Scophthalmus maeoticus* (Pallas))];
 - d) "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 maintaining the gear in place either close to the bottom or floating in the water column;
 - e) "Designated landing point" means ports, or places close to the shore, designated by the CPCs according with recommendation GFCM/32/2008/1 on Port State Measures, including offshore terminals and other installations for landing, transshipping, packaging, processing, refuelling or resupplying of fishing vessels, where landings, transshipments, packaging and/or processing operations of fishery products are permitted;
 - f) "Authorized vessel" means fishing vessel in possession of a fishing authorization entitling it to carry out specific fishing activities during a specified period, in a given area or for a given fishery under specific conditions;
 - g) "Fisheries restricted area" means a geographically-defined sea area in which all or certain fishing activities are temporarily or permanently banned or restricted in order to improve the exploitation and conservation of living aquatic resources or the protection of marine ecosystems;

PART III

Specific measures to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea

Section 1: authorized vessels

3. Active vessels operating in the GFCM GSA-29 targeting turbot shall be authorized to carry out specific fishing activities only insofar as they are indicated in a valid fishing authorization, which shall specify the technical conditions under which those activities could be exerted (see Annex 1).
4. The CPCs shall maintain an updated register of those fishing authorizations and communicate to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 31st January of the year, the list of all vessels using bottom-set gillnets authorized to fish for turbot. The list shall contain for each vessel the information referred to in Annex 1.
5. Upon request, the CPCs shall report information on the fishing vessels authorized to engage in a fishing activity in a given period. In particular, the CPCs shall report the names of the fishing vessels concerned, their external identification number and the individual fishing opportunities allocated to them.
6. Authorized vessels shall comply with the obligations established in Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/2, and provide a detailed report of their fishing activities, including as minimum requirements: operating days, operating area and total catch of turbot. This information shall be provided to the GFCM Secretariat at least quarterly.

7. The CPCs that require a transitional period to fully implement the provisions of Section 1 shall duly inform the GFCM Secretariat by 31 December 2015. Such information shall also specify the duration of this transitional period, which shall not exceed 24 months from the entry into force of this recommendation. In such case, the deadline for submission foreseen in paragraph 4 shall be adapted.

Section 2: Marking and identification of bottom-set gillnets

8. The CPCs shall progressively ensure that all bottom-set gillnets operating in the turbot fishery are clearly identified. A database of the common codifications used by all riparian States shall be created.

9. It shall be prohibited to carry out fishing activities with gillnets used in the turbot fishery which are not identifiable.

10. It shall be prohibited to carry out fishing activities with gillnet used in the turbot fishery for which marker and intermediary buoys are not identifiable.

11. Unmarked abandoned gillnets used in the turbot fishery and found at sea shall be recovered by competent authorities in whose Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) the net is found.

12. Unmarked abandoned gillnets used in the turbot fishery and found at sea shall be confiscated until the owner is either duly identified and sanctioned or destroyed if no owner could be identified.

Section 3: Designated landing points

13. Each CPC shall take the necessary measures to designate, where possible, landing points in which landings of turbot in GSA 29 shall take place.

14. For a landing point to be considered as a designated port, the following conditions shall be met: (a) established landing and transshipping times and places; (b) full inspection coverage during all landing and transshipping times and at all landing and transshipping places.

15. The CPCs shall transmit to the GFCM Executive Secretary, by no later than 30 November of each year, a list of designated landing points in which landings of turbot in GSA 29 shall take place.

16. It shall be prohibited to land or tranship from fishing vessels any quantity of turbot fished in the GSAs 29 at any other place than the landing points designated by the CPCs in accordance with paragraphs 13 and 14.

17. The CPCs shall engage to cooperate in the fight against IUU activities, in particular by sharing information and gathering intelligence to fight against organized crime.

PART IV

National plans for monitoring, control and surveillance

18. National monitoring, control and surveillance plans for the implementation of the provisions of this recommendation shall be established by the CPCs, taking into account the elements listed in Annex 2 and ensuring, *inter alia*, a proper and accurate monitoring and recording of the monthly catches and/or fishing effort deployed.

19. Such national monitoring, control and surveillance plans shall be communicated to the GFCM Secretariat, by 31 January of each year. Each year, one month before the annual session, the results of control activities shall be sent to the GFCM Secretariat for information. These results shall be analysed and discussed annually in a special session of the Compliance Committee.

20. The CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat the type of sanctions applied when IUU activities have been detected as well as global figures for infringements related to IUU activities on turbot fisheries.

PART V

Specific technical measures

21. In 2016 the SAC shall advise on the dimension of turbot bottom-set gillnets allowed to operate in the fishery (maximum length, maximum height and hanging coefficient). To this end, countries shall provide the SAC, prior to the meeting of the WGBS, with the dimensions of gillnets currently used in their fisheries. The WGBS shall analyze this information and propose the maximum dimensions to be used.
22. The SAC and the WGBS shall jointly provide an advice for the technical requirements necessary to implement the provisions contained in Part III, section 2.

PART VI

Development of information strategies and awareness campaigns related to the progressive reduction of IUU fishing in turbot fisheries

23. Communication and awareness-raising plans related to the fight against IUU fishing in turbot fisheries will be established amongst stakeholders and the general public in order to make the problems of IUU better known.
24. The effective participation of stakeholders, including women and fisheries organizations, shall be supported through access to information and education. Diversification activities by fishers seeking to engage in non-fishing activities shall be encouraged.
25. The GFCM Secretariat shall facilitate cooperation among the CPCs, including, when necessary, by ensuring that a scientific contribution is obtained from the SAC.

APPENDIX 8/Annex 1

The list referred to in Part III, Section 1 shall contain for each vessel the following information:

- Name of vessel
- Vessel register number (code assigned by CPCs)
- GFCM registration number (country ISO 3-alpha code + 9 digits, e.g. xxx000000001)
- Port of registration (full name of the port)
- Previous name (if any)
- Previous flag (if any)
- Previous details of deletion from other registries (if any)
- International radio call sign (if any)
- VMS (indicate Y/N)
- Vessel type , length overall and gross tonnage (GT) and/or gross registered tonnage (GRT) and engine power expressed in kW
- Name and address of owner(s), and/or charter and/or operator(s)
- Main target species
- Main gear(s) used for turbot and fleet segment allocation and operational unit as identified in the TASK 1 statistical matrix
- Time period authorized for fishing with gillnet or any other gear likely to fish turbot (if any of such authorization)

**Guidelines for the development of specific monitoring, control and surveillance plans
for turbot in the Black Sea**

Specific monitoring, control and surveillance shall clearly define the following:

a) Means of control

Description of human, technical and financial means specifically available for the implementation of the plans.

b) Inspection strategy (including inspection protocols)

Inspection and surveillance of fishing activities shall concentrate on fishing vessels likely to catch turbot and associated species. In addition, action plans for the control of markets and transport shall be included.

Definition of inspection tasks and procedures.

Each CPC shall specify and describe which sampling strategy will be applied to verify the weighing of catches at first sale as well as the sampling strategy for vessels that are not subject to logbook/landing declaration rules.

c) Guidelines

Explanatory guidelines for inspectors, producer organizations and fishers regarding the set of rules in place for fisheries likely to catch turbot:

- ✓ Rules for the completion of various documents including inspection reports, fishing logbooks, transshipment declarations, landing and take-over declarations, transport documents and sales notes;
- ✓ Technical measures in force, including mesh size and/or mesh dimensions, minimum catching size, temporary restrictions, etc.,
- ✓ Sampling strategies,
- ✓ Cross-check mechanisms.

d) Training of inspectors

National inspectors shall receive all information on authorized vessels, fishing gears and regulations as well as adequate training to specifically achieve the objectives of the monitoring, control and surveillance plan related to turbot. Minimum training requirements are those specified in Recommendation GFCM/32/2008/1 on Port State Measures.

**Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/4
on management measures for piked dogfish in the Black Sea**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter the “GFCM”),

RECALLING that the objectives of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean are to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application;

RECALLING the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development of 2002 and in particular its plan of implementation;

REAFFIRMING the principles of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereafter the “FAO”) and recalling the precautionary and ecosystem approach to fishery management;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/36/2012/3 on fisheries management measures for the conservation of sharks and rays in the GFCM area, including the Black Sea;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that, for piked dogfish in GSA 29 the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee (hereafter the “SAC”) has concluded at its seventeenth session in 2015 that the stock of piked dogfish is chronically depleted and considered as a priority the setting of measures to implement a recovery plan;

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

AIMING to provide a series of management measures for the recovery of the depleted stock of piked dogfish;

ADOPTS in conformity with the applicable relevant provisions of the GFCM Agreement that:

PART I

General objectives, scope and definitions

General objectives

1. Management measures for fisheries exploiting piked dogfish and/or having piked dogfish as significant by-catch in GFCM GSA 29 “Black Sea” shall be developed, in line with the precautionary approach, with a view to providing high long-term yields consistent with the maximum sustainable yield (hereafter “MSY”) and to guaranteeing a low risk of stocks collapse while ensuring sustainable and relatively stable fisheries.
2. The conservation objective shall be to achieve fishing mortality at MSY level no later than 2020.
3. The GFCM Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (hereafter the “CPCs”) whose vessels have been actively fishing, directly or indirectly, piked dogfish in GSA 29 agree to implement common measures for the achievement of the objectives of this recommendation.

Scope

4. The CPCs shall adopt appropriate measures to ensure that GFCM has the necessary data to study and evaluate the level of catches of piked dogfish in the Black Sea.

Definitions

5. For the purposes of this recommendation the following definitions shall apply:
 - "Black Sea" means the GFCM geographical subarea n° 29 as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2;

- "Piked dogfish" (synonym: spiny 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 maintaining the gear in place, either close to the bottom or floating in the water column;
- "Trawl nets" means nets which are actively towed by the main boat engine and consisting of a cone- or pyramid-shaped body (as trawl body), closed at the back by a cod-end and which can extend at the opening by the wings or can be mounted on a rigid frame. Horizontal opening is either obtained by otter boards or provided by a beam or frame of variable shape and size. Such nets can be towed either on the bottom (bottom trawl net) or in mid-water (pelagic trawl net);
- "Fisheries restricted area" means a geographically-defined sea area in which all or certain fishing activities are temporarily or permanently banned or restricted, in order to improve the exploitation and conservation of living aquatic resources or the protection of marine ecosystems.

PART II

Management measures

Section 1: Restrictions to catch piked dogfish

6. Specimens of piked dogfish smaller than 90 cm shall not be retained on board, transhipped, landed, stored, sold nor displayed or offered to sale. When accidentally caught, such specimens of piked dogfish shall be promptly released unharmed and alive, to the extent possible.
7. Without prejudice to the provisions foreseen in paragraph 6, and when a system to avoid discards and the obligation to land all catches have been established by a CPC, the master of the fishing vessel shall not be allowed to discard those catches, and shall therefore land the fish caught independently of the size of the fish caught, in line with the provisions stipulated by such CPC. All quantities landed shall be recorded and shall not be displayed, offered for sale nor used for human consumption.
8. CPCs implementing a landing obligation scheme shall notify its content and characteristics to the GFCM Secretariat, prior to the subsequent GFCM annual session, with a view to informing the other Parties.

Section 2: Fisheries restricted areas (FRAs) and seasons

9. The CPCs shall establish a database of fisheries restricted areas and closed seasons containing detailed information on regulations in place in all riparian States.
10. In addition to the restrictions established by Recommendation GFCM 36/2012/3 regarding the reduction of coastal trawl net fishing to enhance the protection of coastal sharks, a minimum target on the percentage of fishing grounds to be covered by protective measures should be identified by each CPC.

PART III

Monitoring, data collection and research

11. The CPCs shall ensure that:
 - a. information on fishing activities, catch data, incidental taking, release and/or discarding events for piked dogfish are recorded by the ship-owners in the logbook or equivalent document, in line with the provisions of Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1 establishing the GFCM logbook;
 - b. this information is reported to the national authorities for notification to the GFCM Secretariat within the annual national reporting to SAC and through the Task 1;

c. any other additional measures are taken to improve data gathering for the purpose of the scientific monitoring of species.

12. The CPCs shall, individually and collectively, engage in capacity-building efforts and other research cooperative activities to improve knowledge on piked dogfish biology, including population dynamics, migrations, the identification of spawning and nursery areas, survival ratios, and any other characteristics that could effectively support the implementation of this recommendation, including entering into cooperative arrangements with other appropriate international bodies, notably the Black Sea Conference.

13. By 2018 the SAC shall evaluate the effectiveness of the measures adopted under this recommendation, advise on the status of the stock and define target reference points for the achievement of MSY for piked dogfish in the Black Sea.

Terms of reference for the Task Force for a “Strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea Aquaculture”

Considering that the sustainable development of aquaculture is part of the mandate of the GFCM and taking stock of the recent progress in the technical work carried out by its Committee on Aquaculture;

Considering also the achievements and conclusions of the Regional Aquaculture Conference “Blue Growth in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: developing sustainable aquaculture for food security” (Italy, December 2014);

Having regard to the positive experience of the Task Force established for the modernization of the GFCM legal and institutional framework:

The GFCM, at its thirty-ninth session, agreed to establish a task force coordinated by the GFCM Chairperson with the objective to elaborate its future strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea Aquaculture in the GFCM area of competence.

The Task Force will:

- Assess the characteristics of the aquaculture sector at the national, subregional and regional level, in light of the current issues at stake in terms of governance, spatial planning, economic and market issues, ecological and environmental concerns, etc.;
- Evaluate national, subregional and regional needs and constraints hampering the sustainable development of aquaculture;
- Identify strategic goals towards the sustainable development of aquaculture in the region;
- Present and discuss priorities and strategies towards the elaboration and implementation of appropriate measures.

The strategy will be developed and proposed to the Commission by the Task Force, which will work on the basis of the following principles:

- A participatory approach involving national delegates from GFCM Members;
- Transparency, including by reporting and validating different outcomes through the Commission;
- Efficiency, avoiding duplications among relevant stakeholders, existing structures and mechanisms, and creating synergies.

Terms of reference for selected tasks related to the Compliance Committee

Terms of reference of the CoC focal points

With a view to ensuring coordination and cooperation between the contracting party and the GFCM Secretariat in relation to the work of the Compliance Committee, the focal points of CoC shall provide assistance at the national level, including ensuring liaison among relevant authorities, to:

- Ensure the submission of national data in line with relevant GFCM decisions;
- Provide inputs, when requested to, on information to be made available to the CoC (e.g. national reports);
- Facilitate exchange and communications with the GFCM Secretariat on matters relating to IUU fishing activities and fishing vessels by non Members sighted in the GFCM Area;
- Perform any other national duty in relation with the GFCM-CoC activities, as necessary.

Terms of reference of the Working group on IUU fishing

The Working Group shall provide advice for the CoC and perform in particular the following tasks:

- Regularly update available information on the nature, the extent and the impacts of IUU fishing in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;
- Review progress in the implementation of the two roadmaps to fight IUU fishing in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;
- Discuss measures to fight IUU fishing, including their efficacy and the need for regional actions;
- Identify technical assistance needs of countries in relation to the fight against IUU fishing;
- Involve all relevant actors having a mandate or goals relating to the fight against IUU fishing;
- Facilitate the exchange of information on IUU fishing activities, including by non-Members of the GFCM, through an intelligence activity coordinated at the regional level;
- Contribute to the development of a methodology to assess IUU fishing;
- Perform any other duties, as necessary.

Terms of reference of the Working group on legislations and on the Compendium of GFCM decisions

The Working Group shall provide advice for the CoC and perform in particular the following tasks:

- Streamline the Compendium of GFCM decisions by identifying gaps, inconsistencies and areas for improvement;
- Align the decisions in the GFCM Compendium with deadlines set in the GFCM Data collection reference framework (DCRF) for the submission of data;
- Ensure coherence in the use of the terminology employed in the GFCM Compendium in light of the 2014 amended GFCM Agreement;
- Identify means to collect national legislations in force on fisheries and the law of the sea of GFCM Members and relevant non-Members;
- Consider methodologies to update comparative studies on national legislations, including tables and lists, on the basis of information collected;

- Involve legal experts which would interact with the GFCM Secretariat in order to ensure that information collected is reliable;
- Liaise with the FAO Legal Office;
- Review the database with national legislations to be maintained and updated by the GFCM Secretariat with the support of national experts and the FAO Legal Office;
- Perform any other duty, as necessary.

**Pending proposal of Tunisia for a GFCM Recommendation
on the establishment of a closing season in the GFCM GSA 14**

RECOGNIZING the situation of overexploitation of demersal stocks in several geographical subareas (hereafter “GSAs”) in the Mediterranean, including GSA 14;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the scientific advice of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter the “SAC” and the “GFCM”) on the critical state of the shared stocks in the area;

CONSIDERING the importance of GSA 14 in the Mediterranean in terms of biodiversity, volume of catches and socioeconomic impact and with the objective to preserve demersal stocks in the area;

CONSIDERING the socioeconomic importance of demersal fisheries in GSA 14 and with the aim to ensure their sustainability;

ADOPTS the following measures in conformity with the relevant applicable provisions of the GFCM Agreement:

- 1- in order to rationally manage demersal fisheries resources in GSA 14, the GFCM contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (hereafter the “CPCs”) shall apply a closing season in GSA 14 by stopping fishing activities by trawlers in the area;
- 2- stopping of fishing activities by trawlers for all countries (Members and non-Members) in GSA 14 shall be applied over three (3) months during the year (July, August and September).

This measure has been already applied since 2009 by the Tunisian fleet operating in the area, in accordance with the SAC recommendation concerning the reduction of fishing effort for demersal stocks in the Mediterranean.

GFCM autonomous budget for 2015

		US (\$)	Share of total %
STAFF	Professional staff (9)	1,363,000	57.76 %
	Administrative staff (5)	300,000	12.71 %
	TOTAL STAFF	1,663,000	70.48 %
FUNCTIONING	Temporary human resources (Security Guards, admin. support, Overtime)	90,000	3.81 %
	Consultants (including translators of scientific publications)	25,000	1.06 %
	Travel (Staff, Bureau, Coordinators, interpreters, Experts' DSA and tickets)	110,000	4.66 %
	Training	5,000	0.21 %
	Expendable procurement (including printing of publications)	12,000	0.51 %
	Non-expendable procurement	5,000	0.21 %
	General Operating Expenses	15,000	0.64 %
	Internal/External services backcharge	165,000	6.99 %
	Task force	70,000	2.97 %
	TOTAL FUNCTIONING	497,000	21.06 %
	AUTONOMOUS BUDGET (staff + functioning)	2,160,000	
MISC	Hospitality and Miscellaneous (1% of autonomous budget)	21,600	
	FAO Support Costs (4.5% of total)	98,172	
	Capital Fund (3.5% of above)	79,792	
	Participation fund (2.5% of autonomous budget)	-	
	TOTAL AUTONOMOUS BUDGET (US Dollars)	\$ 2,359,564	

APPENDIX 13 (2)

Contributions to the GFCM autonomous budget for 2015

Member	TOTAL		BASIC FEE	GDP COMPONENT		CATCH COMPONENT	
	US (\$)	%	US (\$)	Index	US (\$)	Weighted Total	US (\$)
Albania	20,973	0.89	10,259	1	5,194	18,590	5,520
Algeria	73,958	3.13	10,259	1	5,194	197,023	58,505
Bulgaria	15,453	0.65	10,259	1	5,194		
Croatia	62,199	2.64	10,259	10	51,940		
Cyprus	62,199	2.64	10,259	10	51,940		
Egypt	92,067	3.90	10,259	1	5,194	258,009	76,614
France	114,139	4.84	10,259	20	103,880		
Greece	62,199	2.64	10,259	10	51,940		
Israel							
Italy	114,139	4.84	10,259	20	103,880		
Japan	114,139	4.84	10,259	20	103,880		
Lebanon	18,287	0.78	10,259	1	5,194	9,545	2,834
Libya	98,544	4.18	10,259	10	51,940	122,392	36,344
Malta	62,199	2.64	10,259	10	51,940		
Monaco	10,259	0.43	10,259				
Montenegro	11,409	0.48	10,259			3,874	1,150
Morocco	34,880	1.48	10,259	1	5,194	65,424	19,427
Romania	15,453	0.65	10,259	1	5,194		
Slovenia	62,199	2.64	10,259	10	51,940		
Spain	114,139	4.84	10,259	20	103,880		
Syrian Arab Republic	17,902	0.76	10,259	1	5,194	8,249	2,449
Tunisia	102,087	4.33	10,259	1	5,194	291,750	86,634
Turkey	329,756	13.98	10,259	10	51,940	901,034	267,557
EC	750,985	31.83	10,259			2,494,493	740,726
		100		159		4,370,382	
	2,359,564		235,956		825,847		1,297,760

Total budget	2,359,564 USD
Basic fee	10% of total budget 235,956 USD
Number of Members*	23
Total budget less basic fee	2,123,608 USD
GDP component	35% of total budget 825,847 USD
Catch component	55% of total budget 1,297,760 USD

* Members paying their contributions to the autonomous budget

APPENDIX 14 (1)

GFCM autonomous budget for 2016

		US (\$)	Share of total %
STAFF	Professional staff (9)	1,472,000	59.36 %
	Administrative staff (5)	381,000	15.36 %
	TOTAL STAFF	1,853,000	74.73 %
FUNCTIONING	Temporary human resources (Security Guards, admin. support, Overtime)	60,000	2.42 %
	Consultants (including translators of scientific publications)	20,000	0.81 %
	Travel (Staff, Bureau, Coordinators, interpreters, Experts' DSA and tickets)	100,000	4.03 %
	Training	5,000	0.20 %
	Expendable procurement (including printing of publications)	12,000	0.48 %
	Non-expendable procurement	5,000	0.20 %
	General Operating Expenses	15,000	0.60 %
	Internal/External services backcharge	130,000	5.24 %
	Task force	70,000	2.82 %
	TOTAL FUNCTIONING	417,000	16.82 %
	AUTONOMOUS BUDGET (staff + functioning)	2,270,000	
MISC	Hospitality and Miscellaneous (1% of autonomous budget)	22,700	
	FAO Support Costs (4.5% of total)	103,172	
	Capital Fund (3.5% of above)	83,856	
	Participation fund (2.5% of autonomous budget)	-	
	TOTAL AUTONOMOUS BUDGET (US Dollars)	\$ 2,479,727	

Contributions to the GFCM autonomous budget for 2016

Member	TOTAL		BASIC FEE	GDP COMPONENT		CATCH COMPONENT	
	US (\$)	%	US (\$)	Index	US (\$)	Weighted Total	US (\$)
Albania	22,034	0.89	10,781	1	5,459	18,483	5,794
Algeria	78,755	3.18	10,781	1	5,459	199,429	62,515
Bulgaria	16,240	0.65	10,781	1	5,459		
Croatia	65,366	2.64	10,781	10	54,585		
Cyprus	65,366	2.64	10,781	10	54,585		
Egypt	90,697	3.66	10,781	1	5,459	237,527	74,457
France	119,952	4.84	10,781	20	109,170		
Greece	65,367	2.64	10,781	10	54,585		
Israel							
Italy	119,952	4.84	10,781	20	109,170		
Japan	119,952	4.84	10,781	20	109,170		
Lebanon	19,232	0.78	10,781	1	5,459	9,545	2,992
Libya	98,978	3.99	10,781	10	54,585	107,223	33,611
Malta	65,367	2.64	10,781	10	54,585		
Monaco	10,781	0.43	10,781				
Montenegro	11,955	0.48	10,781			3,745	1,174
Morocco	36,382	1.47	10,781	1	5,459	64,256	20,142
Romania	16,240	0.65	10,781	1	5,459		
Slovenia	65,366	2.64	10,781	10	54,585		
Spain	119,952	4.84	10,781	20	109,170		
Syrian Arab Republic	18,481	0.75	10,781	1	5,459	7,150	2,241
Tunisia	114,802	4.63	10,781	1	5,459	314,424	98,562
Turkey	352,763	14.23	10,781	10	54,585	916,827	287,396
EC	785,747	31.69	10,781			2,472,229	774,965
		100		159		4,350,837	
	2,479,727		247,973		867,904		1,363,850

Total budget	2,479,727 USD
Basic fee	10% of total budget 247,973 USD
Number of Members*	23
Total budget less basic fee	2,231,754 USD
GDP component	35% of total budget 867,904 USD
Catch component	55% of total budget 1,363,850 USD

* Members paying their contributions to the autonomous budget

The thirty-ninth session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), including the sixth session of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF) and the ninth session of the Compliance Committee (CoC), was attended by representatives from 23 Contracting Parties, 3 non-Members as well as 7 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. In the context of the amendment process of the GFCM legal framework, the Commission examined and adopted by consensus its new rules of procedure and financial regulations, in line with the new GFCM Agreement entered into force on 20 May 2014. During the session, the cooperating non-contracting party status was granted to Georgia and Ukraine in light of their increasing involvement in GFCM activities in the Black Sea. Moreover, in order to enhance cooperation with partner organizations, the Commission, based on a proposed set of objectives and activities, requested the GFCM Secretariat to finalize and sign, on behalf of GFCM/FAO, four new memoranda of understanding with MedPAN, ATLAFCO, OceanCare and EATIP. A set of important measures for the management and conservation of fisheries resources in both the Mediterranean and the Black Sea were discussed and agreed upon. In particular, the Commission adopted four recommendations, namely: Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/1 establishing further precautionary and emergency measures in 2016 for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GSA 17 and GSA 18); Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2 on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan; Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/3 on the establishment of a set of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea and Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/4 on management measures for piked dogfish in the Black Sea. The session also provided an opportunity for GFCM Members to reaffirm their willingness to adopt measures to deter illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and to review the progress made in the implementation of the related roadmaps. In this respect, the Commission welcomed the initiative to proclaim, on 24 April, an international day for the fight against IUU fishing. Necessary actions in this respect should be explored. In light of the growing importance of the aquaculture sector in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, and building upon the outcomes of the Regional Aquaculture Conference held in December 2014, the Commission established a task force in charge of developing a "strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture". Finally, the Commission adopted its programme of work for the next intersession and approved, for the first time, its triennial budget (firm for the first two years) amounting to US dollars 2 359 564 for 2015 and US dollars 2 479 727 for 2016. The current mandate of the GFCM Bureau as well as those of CoC, CAF and the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) were exceptionally extended for a two-year term.

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