



Compliance Committee (CoC)

Intersessional meeting of the Compliance Committee, including a session on the Review Panel

FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy, 26–27 January 2017

Final report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The intersessional meeting of the Compliance Committee (CoC) of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) was held on 26–27 January 2017 at FAO headquarters¹. Following the conclusions of the tenth session of the CoC (Malta, May/June 2016), this meeting analysed the replies of GFCM contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) to requests for clarification sent by the GFCM Secretariat regarding the status of implementation of GFCM decisions and the submission of relevant data and information. In addition, the meeting discussed the operationalization of technical assistance in light of the different requests received by the GFCM Secretariat and with a view to addressing existing gaps in compliance. Moreover, the CoC examined the responses received to letters that were sent to relevant non-contracting parties whose fishing vessels had been sighted in the GFCM area of application and reviewed other cases previously brought to its attention. The intersessional meeting of the CoC was preceded by a session on the Review Panel, which was convened, acting upon the decision of the Commission, in order to discuss the activation of this mechanism pursuant to Rule XVI of the GFCM Rules of Procedure.

OPENING, ARRANGEMENTS OF THE MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The intersessional meeting of the Compliance Committee (CoC) of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), including a session on the Review Panel, was held on 26–27 January 2017 at FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy. The meeting was attended by 43 participants from GFCM contracting parties, cooperating non-contracting parties and non-contracting parties (CPCs) and observers, in addition to representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the GFCM Secretariat. The list of participants is enclosed in Appendix B.

2. Mr Josip Markovic, First Vice-Chairperson of the CoC, opened the meeting. At the outset of his address (available under Appendix C), he informed the Committee that its Chairperson, Mr Samir Majdalani, could not participate and he welcomed the numerous participants from CPCs. He noted that, due to recent tragic events occurring in the Mediterranean Sea, fisheries enforcement was currently playing a secondary role to other urgent priorities. However, he was of the opinion that the commitment of CPCs to comply with GFCM recommendations remained strong. This was demonstrated by the requests for technical assistance that had been lodged with the GFCM Secretariat during the intersession with a view to overcoming existing hurdles to fully implementing GFCM recommendations. Acknowledging that much work had yet to be done in this respect, Mr Markovic emphasized that important progress was being made towards a level playing field in the Mediterranean and the Black

¹ This meeting was supported by the European Union under grant agreement no SI2.741730.

Sea. He concluded his address by expressing the hope that discussions on the Review Panel would also be fruitful.

3. Mr Abdellah Srour, GFCM Executive Secretary, presented the objectives of the meeting and introduced the list of CPCs that had lodged credentials with the GFCM Secretariat.

4. The delegate of the European Union (EU [Member Organization]) informed the CoC that the declaration of competence and voting rights presented by her delegation on the occasion of the tenth session of the CoC (Malta, May/June 2016) was still valid.

5. The agenda of the meeting was adopted without amendments, as enclosed in Appendix A. Some additional items were included under any other matters.

SESSION ON THE REVIEW PANEL²

6. The GFCM Secretariat made an introductory presentation recalling the previous discussions held by the Commission and the progress made concerning the Review Panel – namely within the framework of the GFCM Task Force – during the amendment of the GFCM legal framework and at the fortieth session of the Commission (Malta, May/June 2016) and the subsequent intersessional meeting of the Commission. Reference was also made to the evolving role of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) and the increasing volume of scientific advice provided by this committee in support of the work of the Commission towards fisheries conservation and management in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

7. In the ensuing discussions, delegates extensively debated the activation of the Review Panel, pursuant to Rule XVI of the GFCM Rules of Procedure, demonstrating strong willingness to reach a consensus on the most suitable option. To this end, a genuine effort was made to accommodate the views of all delegations while acknowledging the increasing effectiveness of the GFCM, thanks in particular to the work carried out by the SAC and the GFCM Secretariat, in responding to urgent fisheries management needs at the regional and subregional levels.

8. In this regard, the meeting agreed on the following course of action: should a CPC, on the basis of the outcomes of the nineteenth session of the SAC (Slovenia, May 2017), send a formal request to the GFCM Executive Secretary on the need to activate the Review Panel, in light of the necessity to address cases requiring urgent specific management actions, this would constitute a valid and sufficient reason for the Commission to address this issue at its forty-first session (Montenegro, October 2017) with a view to defining all relevant aspects related to the activation of this mechanism. Such procedure would be followed also in relation to future sessions of the Commission.

9. In light of this agreed course of action, the GFCM Executive Secretary was instructed to circulate among all CPCs information regarding the presentation of such a request and to complete/update the draft agenda of the forty-first session of the Commission accordingly. Furthermore, the meeting agreed that, when circulating this information, the attention of all CPCs should be drawn on their responsibility to undertake the necessary consultations and be ready to discuss, at the forty-first session of the Commission, the composition and *modus operandi* of the Review Panel, including possible dates and venues of the meetings foreseen, where appropriate.

10. The meeting expressed great satisfaction for the strong spirit of cooperation among all participants, which resulted in such a historic decision.

DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE TENTH SESSION OF THE COC, INCLUDING THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF A MUTUAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM TO FIGHT AGAINST IUU FISHING

² This session was convened in accordance with the decision taken by the intersessional meeting of the Commission (FAO headquarters, September 2016) on the mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries, which requested the continuation of discussions on the Review Panel (Rule XVI of the Rules of Procedure of the GFCM).

11. The GFCM Secretariat listed the decisions taken at the tenth session of the CoC for which follow-up actions were expected. These included: i) the process towards the declaration of an international day for the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing (“IUU Day”) by the FAO; ii) the alert system for data submission deadlines; iii) the case of two Egyptian vessels that had fished in Italian waters; iv) the operationalization of the mutual assistance system; v) the revision of the GFCM Compendium; and vi) the update of the GFCM IUU vessel list.

12. The CoC expressed gratitude to the GFCM Secretariat for having actively contributed to the endorsement by the FAO, on the occasion of the thirty-second session of its Committee on Fisheries (FAO headquarters, July 2016), of the proposal concerning the declaration of the IUU Day. The proposal was now expected to be tabled to the next session of the FAO Conference (FAO headquarters, July 2017) before the IUU Day could be inscribed in the list of official UN observances. CPCs were invited to support further the declaration of the IUU Day.

13. The delegate of Morocco thanked the GFCM Secretariat for having established the alert system. Such a system would assist CPCs in meeting their obligations to regularly submit data. Furthermore, the alert system could be linked to data quality assessments once relevant indicators were developed and implemented.

14. The delegate of Tunisia expressed the view that the alert system be complemented by information about national legislations on fisheries so as to raise awareness on potential restrictions in place and prevent infringements. He noted that the GFCM Secretariat had established a regional database of fisheries legislation and encouraged its use and dissemination. This could be done in particular through awareness-raising campaigns regarding fisheries legislations in place.

15. The delegate of Egypt informed the CoC that the two Egyptian vessels sighted fishing in Italian waters in May 2016 had been sanctioned under Egyptian law. Their licence had been suspended for six months and would be withdrawn permanently should they fish again without authorization. Egypt had thus complied with its flag state responsibilities.

16. Several delegates praised the operationalization of the mutual assistance system. Such a system would ensure communication, via the GFCM Secretariat, between coastal states and flag states whenever infringements by fishing vessels were detected. It was agreed that, following the adoption of the report of the meeting, CPCs would start sending their communications to the following email address: mutual-assistance@gfcmonline.org. The GFCM Secretariat would then forward them to the relevant flag states which, in turn, should demonstrate, on the occasion of relevant meetings of the CoC, that action had been taken against verified infringements.

17. The CoC acknowledged that the text of the revised GFCM Compendium was being finalized in both English and French. It was hoped that an Arabic version would be made available soon. The GFCM Secretariat was also urged to make the revised version of the GFCM Compendium available online.

18. The delegate of the EU reported about the internal process relating to the listing of fishing vessels as IUU vessels and in particular the provisions of the IUU regulation on information exchange between countries. In addition, the IUU regulation provided for an array of sanctions to curb illegal operations. These were contributing in creating a culture of compliance.

19. Concerning the possibility of revising the mechanism to include a fishing vessel in the GFCM IUU vessel list, including vessels from CPCs, it was clarified that this could be done only by amending Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/8 on the establishment of a list of vessels presumed to have carried out IUU fishing in the GFCM area of application repealing Recommendation GFCM/30/2006/4.

IDENTIFICATION AND CLARIFICATION PROCESS FOR GFCM CONTRACTING PARTIES AND COOPERATING NON-CONTRACTING PARTIES

20. The GFCM Secretariat recalled the tenth session of the CoC in which a number of CPCs, previously identified as being non-compliant with relevant GFCM recommendations, had been commended for the progress made. This had led to the discontinuation of the identification of certain cases of non-compliance, as previously decided by the CoC. The decision of the tenth session of the

CoC to send letters of clarification to all CPCs was also recalled by the GFCM Secretariat. Participants were informed that replies had been received before the intersessional meeting of the CoC for all letters sent to CPCs (26 out of 26).

Review of the status of implementation of GFCM decisions

21. The GFCM Secretariat presented the results of an analysis concerning the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations by CPCs, reported below in alphabetical order. The analysis was based on the replies provided by CPCs to the letters sent by the GFCM Secretariat. The GFCM Secretariat noted that there was a positive trend in the implementation of GFCM recommendations and that CPCs went much further than in the past.

GFCM contracting parties:

- Albania: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations had improved compared to 2016. Some GFCM recommendations, including those on the management plans in the Adriatic Sea, were now being implemented or were in the process of being implemented. The delegate of Albania informed the CoC that significant efforts had been made by his country to meet relevant requirements in GFCM decisions and Albania was filling existing gaps. Further legislative actions were expected for the first quarter of 2017. He then referred to the request for technical assistance lodged with the GFCM Secretariat, which was expected to lead to the signature of a letter of agreement before long. Such technical assistance would help Albania level the playing field.
- Algeria: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was good and additional progress had been made compared to the previous year. Algeria had taken action to ensure that the majority of GFCM recommendations were fully implemented, including, most recently, on important issues such as red coral and the protection of cetaceans. With regard to the vessel monitoring system (VMS), the delegate of Algeria informed the CoC that technical assistance was provided by the GFCM Secretariat. She thanked the GFCM Secretariat for its expert input and prompt support and she indicated that technical assistance was helping her country in the monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of its fleet.
- Egypt: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations continued to present some gaps. Overall, it seemed that the Egyptian legislations were outdated and could benefit from amendments, including with a view to reflecting a number of recently approved GFCM requirements. This would be the case, inter alia, of Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1 concerning the establishment of a GFCM Logbook amending Recommendation GFCM/34/2010/1 and Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/7 concerning minimum standards for the establishment of a VMS in the GFCM area of application. With regard to VMS in particular, the delegate of Egypt explained that, due to financial problems, the country had not yet been in a position to follow through with the establishment of a national control system but that progress was expected before long. It was noted, however, that Egypt might need support in this endeavour.
- European Union: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was good. All GFCM recommendations were now fully implemented. The only exception was Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/6 on reporting of aquaculture data and information, which was partially implemented. The delegate of the EU clarified that information had been provided to the GFCM Secretariat, via France and Italy, as to the reasons why this recommendation was not yet fully implemented. In general, however, she recalled that the EU was strongly supporting a culture of compliance and efforts were being made accordingly.
- Israel: the GFCM Secretariat noted that progress in the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was steady. As anticipated by Israel at the previous meeting, a new legislation had been enacted in 2016, which transposed certain GFCM requirements on the minimum mesh size. The delegate of Israel provided additional information concerning the way these requirements had been transposed into the 2016 legislation. He also indicated that this legislation would be transmitted to the GFCM Secretariat in due course. On the other hand, the

recommendation concerning the logbook remained as not implemented while possible measures were still under discussions in Israel.

- Japan: the implementation of GFCM recommendations was considered excellent, as all recommendations had been fully implemented by Japan. It was reiterated that Japan had not been fishing in the GFCM area of application in recent years, although the country remained very active within the Commission and was positively contributing to regional cooperation, including via the provision of technical assistance to some CPCs.
- Lebanon: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was improving as a number of amendments to the national legal framework had been approved. Nevertheless, some recommendations had yet to be implemented, including the one on the logbook. Lebanon had explained that having a logbook might be unfeasible due to the fact that the obligation to have a logbook would only apply to three fishing vessels. Although the adoption of the new framework legislation prepared for Lebanon with the support of FAO/GFCM continued to remain pending before the Parliament, Lebanon had requested the provision of technical assistance to address some problems being experienced at the national level.
- Libya: Libya was making significant progress in implementing GFCM recommendations and the GFCM Secretariat underlined ongoing efforts at the national level to ensure compliance with GFCM recommendations, including the transmission of data and information, despite the current geopolitical situation. It was noted that some hurdles still existed but it was important to ensure the involvement of Libya in the management of fisheries, particularly in the Strait of Sicily. The provision of technical assistance by the GFCM would depend on the conditions within the country.
- Monaco: all applicable GFCM recommendations had been fully implemented. The delegate of Monaco informed the CoC that no fishing vessels were currently registered in his country. Despite the absence of fishing activities, Monaco's commitment to the conservation of the marine environment, including the Mediterranean Sea, was very strong.
- Montenegro: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was good. Montenegro had continued to make progress in the implementation of GFCM recommendations, including the most recent decisions by the Commission regarding the Adriatic Sea. The GFCM Secretariat recalled the tremendous effort made by Montenegro in 2016 when the vast majority of GFCM recommendations were transposed into its national legislation. The country was also in the process of acceding to the FAO Port State Measures Agreement thus ensuring the full implementation of 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 of application.
- Morocco: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was very good. All recommendations were fully implemented, except Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/3 on reducing incidental bycatch of seabirds in fisheries in the GFCM area of application. The implementation of this recommendation remained in progress as a process had started at the national level to address the incidental catch of these species during fishing activities. The delegate of Morocco recalled that all relevant national legal texts had been sent to the GFCM Secretariat and she expressed appreciation for the constant exchange of communication with the GFCM Secretariat.
- Syria: the GFCM Secretariat drew the attention of the CoC to the fact that Syria had not been involved in the identification and clarification process thus far. However, subsequent to the participation of Syria in the fortieth session of the Commission, where the delegate of Syria indicated that his country would be keen to be involved in this process, the GFCM Secretariat also sent a request for clarification to Syria. The response provided was encouraging but it was evident that Syria was lagging behind in implementing GFCM recommendations. The GFCM Secretariat noted its intention to continue liaising with Syria, in the hope that further progress could be made, despite the current geopolitical situation.

- Tunisia: positive progress was noted in the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations in Tunisia. The delegate of Tunisia noted that many GFCM recommendations had indeed been implemented by his country and, for those which still had to be fully implemented, technical assistance had been requested to the GFCM Secretariat. Among other things, the recommendation on VMS was subject to ongoing efforts by Tunisia. Transponders were being chosen and awareness campaigns were foreseen. It was hoped that joint actions could be undertaken soon in the context of the letter of agreement signed by the Tunisian Government with the GFCM Secretariat in 2015.
- Turkey: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was very good. Most recently, Turkey had made an effort to fully meet GFCM requirements for turbot in the Black Sea and this was supported by the regular transmission of data.

GFCM cooperating non-contracting parties:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was encouraging. Since Bosnia and Herzegovina had only obtained the cooperating non-contracting party status in 2016, it was understandable that the country still had to catch up with other CPCs. Despite efforts being made in particular to submit data to the GFCM Secretariat, Bosnia and Herzegovina would need a new framework legislation on fisheries and aquaculture. The delegate of Bosnia and Herzegovina acknowledged that more work would be needed to ensure compliance and, to this end, she expressed interest in receiving technical assistance. She also explained that her country was particularly interested in ensuring, through the GFCM, the progressive consistency with EU regulations. Most recently, Bosnia and Herzegovina had started some preliminary activities with the AdriaMed regional project and launched the procedure (according to the national law) for the signature of the project agreement on behalf of CoM BiH and FAO.
- Georgia: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was encouraging. Georgia had been granted the cooperating non-contracting party status two years ago and a genuine effort was being made to comply with GFCM recommendations. Recommendations with a focus on conservation issues were being implemented thanks to the regulation enacted by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, whereas those focusing on management required some technical assistance. In this regard, the delegate of Georgia recalled that discussions had been held in the past in order to sign a letter of agreement with the GFCM Secretariat. Some areas of cooperation had been tentatively identified but it was now important to relaunch the process. She therefore hoped that a letter of agreement could be signed soon.
- Ukraine: the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations was good. Out of the three cooperating non-contracting parties, Ukraine was the most advanced in terms of compliance. The national legislation already encompassed a number of GFCM requirements and discussions were currently ongoing at the country level to transpose recent GFCM decisions on the management of Black Sea fisheries. The delegate of Ukraine informed the CoC that, subsequent to the signature of a letter of agreement with the GFCM in October 2016, all elements were in place to begin the provision of technical assistance. To this end, Ukraine and the GFCM Secretariat were fine-tuning a few operational aspects. The possibility to report progress made thanks to technical assistance to the next intersessional meeting of the CoC was discussed.

Status of data and information transmission

22. The GFCM Secretariat presented the results of an analysis of the status of data and information transmission by CPCs, as reported below in alphabetical order. The analysis was based on the replies provided by CPCs to the letters sent by the GFCM Secretariat.

GFCM contracting parties:

- Albania: the GFCM Secretariat noted that most of the requested data and information had been duly received, a result which demonstrated a genuine effort from Albania. The delegate of

Albania thanked the AdriaMed regional project for the support provided and informed the CoC that missing data were forthcoming.

- Algeria: the GFCM Secretariat noted the good status of submission of data and information. The delegate of Algeria confirmed that missing data was under preparation and would be submitted to the GFCM Secretariat before long. The delegate of Algeria thanked the GFCM Secretariat and the CopeMed regional project for the provision of technical assistance.
- Bulgaria (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Bulgaria had been duly received.
- Croatia (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Croatia had been duly received.
- Cyprus (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Cyprus had been duly received.
- Egypt: the status of submission of data and information from Egypt was improving. The GFCM Secretariat acknowledged that Egypt was still working on aquaculture data and that the receipt of data was expected shortly. The delegate of Egypt thanked the EastMed regional project for the support provided.
- France (EU): the status of submission of data and information from France was good. It was acknowledged that the submission of aquaculture data would be forthcoming. The delegate of France explained the reasons for the delayed submission of aquaculture data, which was due to internal problems in the collection of national aquaculture data as well as to difficulties to meet the tight deadline set by Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/6.
- Greece (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Greece had been duly received.
- Israel: the GFCM Secretariat noted that, even if the status of submission of data and information was not reported, data had actually been received although they were transmitted according to the FAO format rather than to GFCM specifications. The GFCM had maintained good communication with Israel and efforts were underway to align the submission of Israel's data with GFCM standards. The delegate of Israel reiterated his request for technical assistance to align data submission formats.
- Italy (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted the good status of the submission of data and information. It was acknowledged that the submission of aquaculture data was missing due to a delay in the procedure launched by the Italian administration to carry out calls for the collection of national data. The missing information would be transmitted shortly.
- Japan: the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Japan had been duly received.
- Lebanon: the GFCM Secretariat noted that the submission of data and information was partial. In particular, technical difficulties were reported by Lebanon in the collection of aquaculture data because a dedicated data collection system was not yet in place.
- Libya: the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Libya had been duly received.
- Malta (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Malta had been duly received.
- Monaco: the status of data and information submission was satisfactory.
- Montenegro: the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information had been duly received, a result which reflected the efforts made by Montenegro in recent years. The delegate of Montenegro thanked the AdriaMed regional project for the support provided.

- Morocco: the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Morocco had been duly received.
- Romania (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Romania had been duly received.
- Slovenia (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Slovenia had been duly received.
- Spain (EU): the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Spain had been duly received.
- Syria: the GFCM Secretariat noted that, although the requested data and information were missing, the communication with Syria was encouraging; this raised hopes that further progress could be made despite the current geopolitical situation.
- Tunisia: the GFCM Secretariat noted that requested data and information from Tunisia had been duly received. It was also noted that the GFCM Secretariat was in contact with the Tunisian focal point and some missing data would be transmitted shortly.
- Turkey: the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data from Turkey had been duly received with the exception of one piece of information on turbot, for which communication was taking place with the Turkish focal point in order to ensure its submission.

GFCM cooperating non-contracting parties:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina: the GFCM Secretariat noted that some of the requested data had been received. The issue of missing information would be tackled in the ongoing discussions with Bosnia and Herzegovina about technical assistance in order to assess the effective applicability to the country of some data requirements.
- Georgia: the GFCM Secretariat noted that most of the requested data from Georgia had been duly received. The missing information was forthcoming.
- Ukraine: the GFCM Secretariat noted that all requested data and information from Ukraine had been duly received.

Discussion on future course of action, including potential identification of cases of non-compliance

23. With a view to summarizing the progress made in both the status of implementation of GFCM recommendations and the submission of data and information, the GFCM Secretariat drew up two comparative tables (reproduced in Appendix D and Appendix E), which were examined by the participants. A comparison between these tables and those presented the previous year was also presented to highlight the improvements made.

24. There was general agreement that CPCs were making much progress in relation to the implementation of GFCM recommendations and the timely submission of data and information. It was noted that a certain level of maturity had now been reached within the CoC and that it seemed appropriate to take steps towards further raising the level. To this end, it was agreed that future efforts should focus, in particular, on ensuring the quality of the data collected.

25. The delegate of the EU was pleased to note that, in a relatively short time, the CoC had fostered such a cooperative spirit, making sure that all CPCs submitted timely information on the implementation of GFCM recommendations and on data submission. However, he expressed concern for the status of implementation of some crucial GFCM recommendations which should be by now fully implemented by all CPCs. In this regard, he referred in particular to the recommendation on VMS and logbook and requested the GFCM Secretariat to present a detailed assessment of the implementation of this recommendation to the upcoming meeting of the Working Group on MCS, including a list of the fishing vessels in national fleets of CPCs which were concerned by the aforementioned technical requirements. Furthermore, he noted that it would be useful if the comparative tables on compliance prepared by the GFCM Secretariat could be made available to CPCs before the intersessional meeting of the CoC. This

would give everyone sufficient time to look at the situation, in terms of compliance, and come to the intersessional meeting with a more detailed and justified position.

26. The GFCM Secretariat drew the attention of CPCs to the fact that data in particular were often submitted only a few days before the intersessional meeting of the CoC, thus leaving little time for the GFCM Secretariat to analyse it and present information. Although there were no problems in submitting the tables related to compliance to CPCs in advance, it was important to understand that information might be sparse without prompt reporting by CPCs.

27. The representatives of the Mediterranean Advisory Council (MedAC) and the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) welcomed the progress made by CPCs in the remit of the CoC and encouraged them to intensify their efforts in the context of the identification and clarification process.

28. The CoC agreed to continue the identification and clarification process over the next intersession. With a view to streamlining this process, it was proposed that the tables related to compliance be sent by the GFCM Secretariat to CPCs two weeks before the next intersessional meeting of the CoC, along with any other relevant information. The GFCM Secretariat would hence stop the analysis of information when transmitting these tables whereas CPCs which still have to respond would have an opportunity to present missing information directly at the intersessional meeting of the CoC. Further discussions on this course of action could be foreseen on the occasion of the eleventh session of the CoC (FAO headquarters, June 2017).

CLARIFICATION AND IDENTIFICATION PROCESS FOR RELEVANT GFCM NON-CONTRACTING PARTIES

29. The GFCM Secretariat recalled that the mandate of the intersessional meeting of the CoC also included the identification of possible cases of non-compliance by relevant non-contracting parties. It also recalled that the CoC had been attentively following the activity of non-contracting parties allegedly fishing in the GFCM area of application and that letters had been sent to relevant non-contracting parties during the intersession.

Review of available information concerning compliance with GFCM decisions

30. A review of the available information, including on the basis of the replies received, was presented for the following non-contracting parties, in alphabetical order.

- Belize: the GFCM Secretariat reported that Belize was the only non-contracting party that never responded to the letters sent thus far. This included a reminder by the European Commission which had offered its support to the GFCM in contacting Belize. Due to the lack of a response by Belize, and based on the decisions held during the last session of the CoC, the Okapi Marta vessel had been included in the GFCM IUU vessel list. Although the whereabouts of this vessel were currently unknown, the GFCM Secretariat motioned for retaining it within the GFCM IUU vessel list.
- China: an update was provided concerning the ongoing cooperation with China. The GFCM Secretariat drew the attention of the CoC to the latest reply received by China to an official letter sent on November 2016 on alleged fishing activities by Chinese vessels in the Mediterranean Sea. The Chinese authorities had confirmed that no Chinese vessels crossing the Mediterranean Sea had engaged in fishing activities in the area as they were all *en route* to West African countries. Furthermore, the Chinese authorities had informed the GFCM Secretariat that fishing in the Mediterranean Sea was prohibited for Chinese vessels.
- Mongolia: despite being a landlocked country, a number of fishing vessels were registered in Mongolia. Furthermore, this country had ratified the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and was therefore bound by its provisions, including the responsibilities of the flag state. Since three Mongolian vessels had been sighted in the Mediterranean Sea in 2016 (i.e. Ara, Glitt and Lontra), the CoC at its tenth session had mandated the GFCM Secretariat to send a letter to Mongolia and request clarifications. The response by Mongolia was presented to the CoC and the GFCM Secretariat welcomed the willingness of the

relevant national authorities to cooperate. The information provided indicated that all three vessels had a regular single voyage certificate without permission to engage in fishing operations. Mongolia also confirmed that no fishing activities in the Mediterranean Sea had taken place as these vessels were just transiting to reach Persian Gulf ports.

- Portugal: the GFCM Secretariat recalled that in 2015 and 2016 Portugal had submitted Task 1 data and that communication with relevant national authorities was now uninterrupted. Thanks also to the European Commission, all mandatory data under the GFCM recommendations applicable to Portugal were regularly being submitted. As for the two Portuguese vessels fishing in the Mediterranean Sea (i.e. Agriao and Corisco), the CoC was informed that 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, was not applicable to them as they were not trawlers. As for the status of Portugal within the GFCM, due to its membership to the EU, it could not become a cooperating non-contracting party to the Commission. Portugal would hence continue to cooperate either in its current capacity of non-contracting party, via the EU, or as a fully-fledged GFCM contracting party, should the country decide to accede to the GFCM Agreement in the future.
- Republic of Korea: the case of the Republic of Korea was reviewed, with particular reference to the Sajo Melita vessel. The GFCM Secretariat recalled the decision made by the Commission at its fortieth session to include this vessel in the GFCM record of fishing vessels larger than 15 metres in length overall authorized to fish in the GFCM area of application (GFCM-AVL), subsequent to the transmission of relevant data by the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries to the GFCM Secretariat. However, when contacted to update the information on the Sajo Melita, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries had indicated to the GFCM Secretariat that this vessel was no longer flying the Korean flag. Consequently, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries requested the GFCM Secretariat to delete it from the GFCM-AVL. Such a course of action required a previous verification of the current whereabouts of the vessel as well as of the flag it was now flying. Allegedly, the Sajo Melita was still harboured in Maltese ports.
- Republic of Moldova: the GFCM Secretariat referred to the declaration by the Republic of Moldova which was read out on the occasion of the High-Level Conference towards enhanced cooperation on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture (Romania, October 2016), whereby the Deputy Minister for Environment indicated the readiness of his country to become a GFCM cooperating non-contracting party. Although the Republic of Moldova was a landlocked country, it was very interested in the sustainable development of aquaculture consistent with GFCM standards at the regional level. Furthermore, the Republic of Moldova enjoyed the rights vested on landlocked countries by the UNCLOS, to which it is a contracting party, and had agreed to cooperate with the EU on maritime policy issues by means of relevant provisions in the 2014 Association Agreement between the EU and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the Republic of Moldova, of the other part (Chapter 13, Articles 71 to 75, refers). With a view to honouring its commitment to fulfil relevant obligations enshrined therein, the Republic of Moldova had lodged an official request with the GFCM Secretariat for cooperating non-contracting party status following the conference in Romania. The CoC was invited to consider this request and take action.
- Russian Federation: the CoC was informed that the Russian Federation had responded to the letter sent by the GFCM Secretariat in November 2016 in which relevant data and information were requested. It was noted that the Russian Federation had been actively cooperating with the GFCM, including in the context of the identification and clarification process. Recently, an official certified translation into Russian of the amended GFCM Agreement had been handed over to the Russian permanent mission to FAO as the country was in the process of considering membership to the GFCM. In the short term, it was hoped that the Russian Federation could participate in the upcoming meetings of the GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS) and provide data required under relevant recommendations consistent with GFCM requirements.

in place. For the time being, data submitted by the Russian Federation did not comply with such requirements.

31. The CoC followed upon cases that had been brought to its attention at its previous intersessional meeting. In this regard, the GFCM Secretariat presented data on fishing activities by Palestine. Reference was made to the ongoing transmission of data and information by Palestine, which was fully consistent with GFCM applicable requirements. The importance of this information in the context of the technical work of the GFCM was noted.

Remarks and discussions on the future course of action (non-contracting parties)

32. The CoC expressed great satisfaction for the ongoing cooperation and communication with relevant non-contracting parties, with particular regard to those non-contracting parties in attendance. It was agreed that such cooperation should continue against the background of the identification and clarification process.

33. With regard to the case of the Okapi Marta vessel, the Committee confirmed its inclusion in the GFCM IUU vessel list. Whereas concern was expressed for the lack of a response from Belize to the letters sent by the GFCM Secretariat thus far, efforts should be renewed to contact the relevant national administration of this country.

34. With reference to the sighting of Chinese vessels in the Mediterranean Sea, the CoC agreed that the GFCM Secretariat should continue to liaise with China and exchange relevant information in order to build upon the ongoing positive cooperation. The Committee was pleased to note that China was providing timely and exhaustive responses to the GFCM Secretariat.

35. The delegate of Mongolia thanked the CoC for the opportunity provided to clarify the position of his country on the alleged fishing activities of three Mongolian-flagged fishing vessels. He confirmed that no fishing activities had taken place in the Mediterranean Sea and recalled that his country was committed to ensuring that the provisions of the UNCLOS were implemented, including its flag state responsibilities. Despite being a landlocked state, Mongolia was aware of the problems linked to IUU fishing worldwide and stood ready to offer further cooperation, including to the GFCM where appropriate.

36. The CoC welcomed progress in relation to the regular submission of data and information by Portugal. Furthermore, it acknowledged that, as stated by the delegate of the EU, Portugal was fully complying with relevant GFCM recommendations in place.

37. The delegate of the EU confirmed that the Sajo Melita vessel was harboured in Malta. An investigation was currently ongoing to determine the status of this vessel, which had been recently transferred to a local company. As soon as the situation would become clearer, the CoC could consider recommending the deletion of the Sajo Melita vessel from the GFCM-AVL. The delegate of the EU also indicated that the EU was informed of illegal transshipment activities.

38. In light of the official request received from the Republic of Moldova for obtaining the GFCM cooperating non-contracting party status, the CoC welcomed this request and decided that it would be forwarded to the Commission at its next session for endorsement. The delegate of the Republic of Moldova expressed his gratitude to the CoC and stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation with the GFCM, following the successful outcomes of the High-Level Conference towards enhanced cooperation on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture. It was hoped that this conference would lay the groundwork for further iterations and joint initiatives, particularly in the remit of the WGBS.

39. The delegate of the Russian Federation thanked the CoC for involving his country in the identification and clarification process. He stated that the Russian Federation would continue to cooperate with the GFCM while the issue of membership remained under consideration at the national level. Data on turbot, consistent with relevant GFCM recommendations, would be submitted before long to the GFCM Secretariat.

40. The CoC noted the efforts by Palestine in submitting data and information on fishing activities as well as the request for technical assistance.

OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

41. The GFCM Secretariat introduced relevant provisions in the GFCM legal framework relating to the provision of technical assistance, with specific focus on Target 5 of the Mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries. It was recalled that this target was expected, in particular, to improve the provision of technical assistance by setting up a comparable mechanism which would streamline capacity building in CPCs. To this end, coordination would be needed to ensure that all relevant stakeholders in a position to provide capacity building be involved, thus avoiding duplications and promoting synergies. These included, among others, the FAO and the FAO regional projects, partner organizations and donor countries having ad hoc initiatives for the provision of technical assistance (e.g. the EU and Japan).

42. Several delegations expressed their gratitude to the GFCM Secretariat for the ongoing provision of technical assistance, including Algeria and Tunisia. At the same time, they noted that for such assistance to be fully efficient and beneficial, it was important to promote a concerted approach. In this respect, it was fundamental to harness all available support, starting from that of the FAO and its regional projects, and make sure that all stakeholders concerned worked as a cohesive unit.

43. The delegate of the EU noted that there was a potential risk of duplications in the provision of technical assistance by the EU, GFCM and FAO. Several opportunities existed at the EU level to provide technical assistance, including TAIEX, twinning projects and ad hoc support under association agreements in place. Still, he expressed the view that such a risk could be avoided through a mapping of existing opportunities between institutions. Such an exercise would help countries to better assess existing opportunities and identify, in turn, the most appropriate course of action.

44. Mr Enrico Arneri, speaking on behalf of the FAO regional projects, welcomed the progress made by the CoC in many areas and made specific reference to the provision of technical assistance. In his view, the Mid-term strategy was a joint effort and the FAO regional projects were a part of it. Consequently, the FAO regional projects would stand ready to contribute to the implementation of this important instrument.

45. The CoC invited the GFCM Secretariat to map existing technical assistance opportunities so as to steer the provision of technical assistance.

ANY OTHER MATTER

46. The GFCM Secretariat provided an overview of the main outcomes of the Meeting on GFCM fisheries data requirements (FAO headquarters, November 2016) as relevant to the CoC. This meeting had been organized following the request made at the fortieth session of the Commission to review the technical contents of the recently adopted Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/2 on the progressive implementation of data submission in line with the Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF). In highlighting that all data components included in the new recommendation were essential for the formulation of meaningful management measures, challenges and potential solutions were also addressed, with a view to supporting the full implementation of fisheries data submission. The GFCM Secretariat also recalled that the meeting made progress in the field of fisheries data quality as a result of the definition of four operational indicators (i.e. conformity, stability, consistency and accuracy), following discussions at the previous intersessional meeting of the CoC. A testing phase to implement data quality checks (with preliminary thresholds) would be carried out during the transitional period of Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/2. To this end, a newly established online platform would be available in the first half of April 2017 to facilitate data transmission by CPCs to the GFCM Secretariat in accordance with relevant fisheries data requirements (i.e. fleet register, GFCM-AVL, dolphinfish, red coral, data submission in line with the DCRF).

47. The delegate of the EU welcomed the progress made in streamlining data collection and submission by CPCs to the GFCM, which would hopefully result in a tangible improvement and the full implementation of the DCRF.

48. The delegate of Tunisia noted that the GFCM had considerably improved in the field of data collection. Support to CPCs was needed though in the transition to the DCRF.
49. The CoC was in favour of data quality indicators, as these would contribute to the management of fisheries. Furthermore, these indicators would provide an opportunity for the GFCM Secretariat to liaise with CPCs whenever data were poor and ensure that national authorities submit quality information.
50. Furthermore, the CoC agreed on the importance for CPCs of using the newly established online platform, which would facilitate data transmission to the GFCM, enhancing the communication with the GFCM Secretariat about data compliance-related aspects.
51. The GFCM Executive Secretary reminded CPCs about the deadlines set in Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/7 concerning the authorization of the use of remotely operated vehicles within the framework of national scientific research programmes on red coral. CPCs concerned by the use of remotely operated vehicles promised they would take timely action.
52. Mr Neil Ansell, from the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), informed the CoC on the ongoing elaboration of a pilot project for the Strait of Sicily, pursuant to recommendation GFCM/40/2016/4 on establishing a multiannual plan for the fisheries exploiting European hake and deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily (GSAs 12 to 16). This recommendation provided, inter alia, that CPCs establish before 2018 an observation and inspection programme to ensure compliance with the conservation and management measures contained in the recommendation. The project involved a number of elements including joint operational activities and inspections, exchange of information, training and capacity building, procedures for dealing with sanctions and the application of technology for detecting potential IUU activities. In the context of the European Coastguard initiative, Mr Ansell reported that EFCA was cooperating closely with other EU agencies (Frontex and EMSA) in the Mediterranean Sea. Such interagency cooperation was instrumental to the collection and exchange of information that could be made available in support of GFCM efforts to fight IUU fishing. He also reported on the ongoing consultations with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, indicating that it was intended to move forward with the project with a view to presenting it to the Working Group on MCS (Greece, May 2017). Following an initial meeting in December 2016, a meeting was planned for 16–17 March at EFCA in Spain in which the pilot project would be further developed and implemented.
53. The delegate of Tunisia confirmed that countries concerned by the application of Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/4 were controlling this area together and further efforts were being made, including in coordination with EFCA, to stamp out IUU fishing activities. He was pleased that the foundations had been laid to address this important issue within the remit of the GFCM but warned other countries, which were known to be fishing in the Strait of Sicily, not to miss out on the chance to participate in the ongoing consultations and activities.
54. The delegate of the EU agreed with Tunisia in that, without concerted actions, all efforts to control fishing activities in the Strait of Sicily would be undermined. To avoid this, the EU was ready to support the countries concerned and provide, where necessary, the appropriate technical assistance. CPCs were urged to strive to make 2017 a success year for control and the realization of this would depend on sound cooperation at the technical and operational levels. It was asserted that transshipping activities in particular should be targeted.
55. The delegate of Egypt was also in agreement.
56. The Executive Secretary invited concerned CPCs to present pilot projects to the upcoming meeting of the Working Group on MCS so that the CoC could endorse them. He then stressed that, in the past, cooperation had been sought whether some fishing vessels engaged in IUU activities were reported from CPCs. However, despite requests sent by the GFCM Secretariat, no feedback to the reports of IUU fishing activities had been received. Perhaps the operationalization of the mutual assistance system would speed up this notification process and prompt CPCs to timely react to future requests by the GFCM Secretariat.
57. The CoC agreed on the use of the mutual assistance system also with a view to informing CPCs of potential IUU fishing activities detected by the GFCM Secretariat. Furthermore, it urged cooperation

among CPCs. Should the GFCM Secretariat request cooperation via the mutual assistance system, CPCs should comply with their obligations, as foreseen by international law, and take action. This would not only include the duty to cooperate with the GFCM Secretariat in investigating alleged IUU fishing activities but also the responsibility of taking sanctions against the wrongdoers, where appropriate.

58. The delegate of the EU presented the draft declaration of the Ministerial Conference on the sustainability of Mediterranean fisheries, to be held in Malta on 29–30 March 2018. This important event, which was being convened 13 years after the Venice Conference, was promoted by the European Commission in the context of the process launched in Catania, when a high-level seminar was organized in February 2016 to discuss how to reverse the declining trend in the Mediterranean fish stocks. The objective of the “MedFish4Ever Declaration” would be to unite all riparian countries in the Mediterranean Sea benchmarking the work to be done in the next decade to ensure the sustainability of marine living resources in the Mediterranean Sea. To this end, the declaration would set the following targets: exchange of data collection and better scientific evaluation, establishment of ecosystem-based fisheries management frameworks, development of a culture of compliance and elimination of IUU fishing, support to sustainable small-scale fisheries and greater solidarity and coordination in the Mediterranean. The MedFish4Ever Declaration was meant to be in line with the international legal framework as well as with the Mid-term strategy adopted by the GFCM. The draft had been already circulated to other countries which had been all invited to provide comments and views to the text via email by 6 February 2017. The delegate of Tunisia was strongly in favour of this initiative. He was of the view that the situation had drastically changed since the adoption of the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference for the Sustainable Development of Fisheries in the Mediterranean in 2003 and that the time had come to raise awareness on the importance of Mediterranean fisheries, including among decision-makers.

59. The delegate of Morocco also supported the initiative which was relevant to national strategies in place as well as to the Mid-term strategy.

60. The delegate of Algeria welcomed the upcoming Ministerial Conference and hoped it could help Mediterranean countries to make further progress.

61. The GFCM Executive Secretary noted that the MedFish4Ever Declaration was largely based on the role of the Commission. To this end, it included several calls for action addressed to the GFCM. Consequently, as the GFCM was invited to take up a leading role and ensure coordination, he assured that all efforts would be made and that a short evaluation of the implementation of the Venice Declaration would be presented in Malta.

62. The GFCM Secretariat read out a letter sent by The Shark Trust to the CoC on the prohibition to fish and retain several shark and ray species, as adopted by the GFCM. In the letter, concern was expressed as details on associated national legislations transposing the regional prohibition were allegedly lacking. Furthermore, the regional fisheries statistics which were referred to in the letter revealed substantial landings of elasmobranch species. The Shark Trust therefore requested a more detailed assessment of domestic regulations proposed and/or in place to protect the elasmobranchs and looked forward to cooperating with the GFCM on this important matter.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COC, INCLUDING IN RELATION TO THE IDENTIFICATION AND CLARIFICATION PROCESS

63. The intersessional meeting of the CoC agreed upon the following general conclusions:

- Continue to support the declaration of the International Day for the fight against IUU fishing;
- Make use of the alert system to submit relevant data and information in a timely manner;
- Launch the mutual assistance system and request that the GFCM Secretariat ensure communication with CPCs on potential infringements detected;
- Disseminate information on IUU vessels in the GFCM IUU list so that operations by these vessels may be prevented; and

- Ensure proper coordination towards the provision of technical assistance, including with other actors and stakeholders (e.g. FAO regional projects, partner organizations, donors) in order to avoid duplications.

64. Furthermore, the intersessional meeting of the CoC agreed upon the following specific conclusions in connection with the identification and clarification process:

- Continue the identification and clarification process and make sure that the tables of compliance (implementation of decisions and submission of data) are sent to CPCs two weeks before the next intersessional meeting of the CoC;
- Ensure the regular transmission of legal texts with national legislations to the GFCM Secretariat in order to further the critical analysis of the implementation of GFCM recommendations;
- Carry out data quality assessments based on submissions received with a view to verifying that available data are scientifically sound for management purposes;
- Confirm the listing of the Okapi Marta in the GFCM IUU list and draw the attention of other RFMOs to the activities of this vessel;
- Continue liaising with China and Mongolia and exchange relevant information on their flagged fishing vessels, when appropriate;
- Ensure compliance with GFCM decisions, as well as the regular transmission of data, by Portugal and the Russian Federation in the context of their ongoing cooperation with the GFCM, consistent with GFCM formats;
- Determine the status of the Sajo Melita vessel, including in light of its potential de-listing from the GFCM-AVL;
- Endorse the request from the Republic of Moldova on obtaining cooperating non-contracting party status;
- Bring to the attention of CPCs any potential future activities of non-contracting parties; and
- Continue to collect data and information on fishing activities by Palestine.

CLOSURE OF THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE COC

65. The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting were adopted on 27 January 2017, whereas the final report was endorsed by email. Actions to be taken by the GFCM Secretariat according to the adopted conclusions are subsequent to the endorsement of the final report of the meeting by email.

Agenda

THURSDAY 26 JANUARY

Morning, 10.00–13.00

Session on the Review Panel*

- Opening and background information on the Review Panel
 - Task Force on the Modernization of the GFCM Legal and Institutional Framework
 - Amendment to the GFCM legal framework
 - Fortieth session of the Commission
 - Intersessional meeting of the Commission
- Open discussion and conclusions of the session

Afternoon, 15.00–18.00

Intersessional meeting of the Compliance Committee

1. Opening, arrangements of the intersessional meeting of the CoC and adoption of the agenda
2. Decisions taken at the tenth session of the CoC, including the operationalization of a mutual assistance system to fight IUU fishing
3. Identification and clarification process for GFCM contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties
 - Review of the status of implementation of GFCM decisions, the transmission of data and the provision of technical assistance
 - Discussion on future course of action, including potential identification of cases of non-compliance

WEDNESDAY 27 JANUARY

Morning, 9.00–12.00

Afternoon, 14.00–17.00

3. Identification and clarification process for GFCM contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (cont.)
4. Identification and clarification process for relevant non-contracting parties
 - Review of available information concerning compliance with GFCM decisions
 - Discussions on future course of action, including requests for cooperating non-contracting party status and identification of potential cases of non-compliance

5. Operationalization of the provision of technical assistance
6. Any other matter
7. Conclusions and recommendations of the intersessional meeting of the CoC
8. Closure of the meeting

List of participants

ALBANIA

Arian PALLUQI
Director
Fishery Directorate Ministry of
Agriculture, Rural Development
and Water Administration
Blv. Deshmoret e Kombit, 2,
Tirana, Albania
E-mail: Arian.Palluqi@bujqesia.gov.al

Roland KRISTO
Fishery Directorate Ministry of
Agriculture, Rural Development
and Water Administration
Blv. Deshmoret e Kombit, 2,
Tirana, Albania
E-mail: rolandkristo@gmail.com

ALGERIA

Nadia BOUHAFS
Inspectrice
Ministère de l'Agriculture, du Développement
Rural et de la Pêche
Rue des Quatres Canons
Alger, Algérie
E-mail: nabouhafs@yahoo.fr

BULGARIA

Dimitar VALKOV
Director
Management of Fisheries and
Conservation of Fish Resources Directorate
National Agency for Fisheries and
Aquaculture
Aleksandar Batenberg No 1
8000, Burgas, Bulgaria
E-mail: dimitar.valkov@iara.government.bg

CROATIA

Josip MARKOVIĆ
Head of Sector for Resources Management
and Aquaculture
Ministry of Agriculture
Directorate of Fisheries
Planinska 2a
Zagreb, Croatia
E-mail: josip.markovic@mps.hr

CYPRUS

Spyridon ELLINAS
Embassy of the Republic
of Cyprus to the Holy See
Permanent Representation to FAO
Piazza Farnese, 44
00186 Rome, Italy
Tel.: 06 6865758
E-mail: faoprcyp@tin.it

EGYPT

Ghada SHALABY
Head of International Cooperation Department
Ministry of Agriculture and Land
Reclamation
Dokki – Cairo, Egypt
E-mail: zaki_rafaat2000@yahoo.com

EUROPEAN UNION

Valérie LAINE
Chef d'unité
Commission Européenne
Rue Joseph II 99
1049 Bruxelles, Belgium
E-mail: valerie.laine@ec.europa.eu

Sérgio Luis MARTINS E AMORIM
Fisheries Control Expert
European Commission - DG MARE
Rue Joseph II 99
1000 Bruxelles -J-99 07/058
E-mail: sergio-luis.martins-e-
amorim@ec.europa.eu

François ZIEGLER
Policy Officer
EU Commission
99, rue Josphe II
1000 Brussels, Belgium
E-mail: francois.ziegler@ec.europa.eu

Neil ANSELL
Manager - International Dimension and
Cooperation
European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)
Av. Garcia Barbon, 4,
Vigo, Spain
E-mail: neil.ansell@efca.europa.eu

FRANCE

Benoit ARCHAMBAULT
Chargé de mission
Bureau des affaires européennes et
internationales
Direction des pêches maritimes et de
l'aquaculture
Ministère de l'environnement, de l'énergie et
de la mer
Tour Voltaire – 1 place des Degrés 9
2055 La Défense cedex - Paris
Tel. : +33 140818936
E-mail:
benoit.archambault@developpementdurable.gov.fr

ISRAEL

David OPATOWSKI
Minister Counsellor Agricultural Affairs
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development
1-3 avenue de la Paix
1202 Geneva, Switzerland
E-mail: agriculture@geneva.mfa.gov.il

ITALY

Mauro COLAROSSO
Direzione Generale della Pesca marittima e
dell'Aquacoltura
Dipartimento delle politiche competitive,
della qualità agroalimentare e della pesca
Ministero delle Politiche Agricole,
Alimentari e Forestali
Via XX Settembre 20
Rome, Italy
Tel.: +39 3497645360
E-mail: m.colarossi@politicheagricole.it

Ilaria FERRARO
Direzione Generale della Pesca marittima e
dell'Aquacoltura
Dipartimento delle politiche competitive,
della qualità agroalimentare e della pesca
Ministero delle Politiche Agricole,
Alimentari e Forestali
Via XX Settembre 20
Rome, Italy
E-mail: i.ferraro@agriconsulting.it

MALTA

Randall CARUANA
Director
Ministry for Sustainable Development,
Environment and Climate Change
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Ingiered Road, Marsa, MRS 3303
Valletta, Malta
E-mail: randall.caruana@gov.mt

MONACO

Jean-Philippe BERTANI
Deputy Permanent Representative of
Monaco to the FAO
Embassy of Monaco in Italy
Via Antonio Bertoloni 36
00197 Rome, Italy
E-mail: jpbertani@ambasciatamonaco.it

MONTENEGRO

Deniz FRLJUCKIC
Adviser for IT in fishery
Ministry of Agriculture and rural
Development
Rimski trg 46
Podgorica, Montenegro
E-mail: deniz.frljuckic@mpr.gov.me

MOROCCO

Bouchra HAOUIJAR
Chargée suivi des pêcheries en
Méditerranée
Division de la Durabilité et Aménagement
des Ressources Halieutiques
Département de la pêche maritime
Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche
Maritime
Av. Belhassan Ouazzani, Nouveau quartier
administratif - Haut Agdal
Rabat, Maroc
E-mail: haoujar@mpm.gov.ma

ROMANIA

Vlad MUSTACIOSU
Counsellor
Permanent Representative to the FAO
Embassy of Romania
Via Nicolò Tartaglia, 36
00197 Rome, Italy
E-Mail: roma@mae.ro

SLOVENIA

Roman ČIČMIRKO
Senior Adviser
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
of the Republic of Slovenia
Dunajska cesta 22
1000 Ljubljana Slovenia
E-mail: roman.cicmirko@gov.si

SPAIN

Encarnación BENITO REVUELTA
Jefa De Area
DG Recursos Pesqueros Y Acuicultura
Secretaria General De Pesca (Mapama)
C/ Velazquez 144
28006 Madrid, Spain
E-mail: ebenitor@magrama.es

TUNISIA

Ridha M'RABET
Directeur général
Direction générale de la pêche et de
l'aquaculture
Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Ressources
Hydrauliques et de la Pêche
30 Rue Alain Savary
1002 Tunis, Tunisia
E-mail: ridha.mrabet@iresa.agrinet.tn

COOPERATING NON CONTRACTING PARTIES

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Suada HADZIC
Head of Department for International
Cooperation and Project Coordination
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic
Relations
Musala 9
Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina
E-mail: suada.hadzic@mvteo.gov.ba

GEORGIA

Irine LOMASHVILI
Chief Specialist
Biodiversity Protection Service
Ministry of Environment and Natural
Resources Protection of Georgia
6, Gulua street,
0114, Tbilisi, Georgia
E-mail: irinaloma@yahoo.com

UKRAINE

Vasyl TUROK
Head
Department of International Cooperation State
Agency of Fisheries of Ukraine
45a, Sichovykh Striltsiv str.
04053 Kyiv, Ukraine
E-mail: inter@darg.gov.ua

NON CONTRACTING PARTIES

MOLDOVA

Andrei URSACHE
Head
Unit of Water Resources, Soil, Subsoil
Ministry of Environment
9, Cosmonautilor street
MD 2005 Chisinau, Moldova

Amgaabazar SHINEBAATAR
Second Secretary
Embassy of Mongolia
Via Vincenzo Bellini, 4
00198 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 06 8540536
E-mail: rome@mfa.gov.mn

MONGOLIA

Davaadash SAMBUU
Counsellor
Embassy of Mongolia
Via Vincenzo Bellini, 4
00198 Rome, Italy
Tel.: +39 06 8540536
E-mail: rome@mfa.gov.mn

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Alexander OKHANOV
Counsellor
Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation
to FAO and other UN agencies in Rome,
Via Gaeta, 5
00185 Rome, Italy
E-mail: rusfishfao@mail.ru

OBSERVERS

PALESTINE

Yaser SHTAYA
Director of Fisheries
Ministry of Agriculture
Ramallah Albalu _Street
Ramallah, Palestine
E-mail: yaser1971@hotmail.co.uk

WWF

Marco COSTANTINI
Project Manager
WWF Mediterranean Program
via Po 25/c
00198 Rome
E-mail: mcostantini@wwfmedpo.org

MEDAC

Rosa CAGGIANO
Executive Secretary
MEDAC
Via Nazionale, 243
00184 Rome, Italy
E-mail: r.caggiano@med-ac.eu

FAO REGIONAL PROJECTS

Enrico ARNERI
Project Coordinator
FAO AdriaMed/MedSudMed
Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use
and Conservation Division (FIRF)
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 1
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel.: (+39) 06 57056092
E-mail: enrico.arneri@fao.org

Luca CERIOLA
MedSudMed
Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use
and Conservation Division (FIRF)
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 1
00153, Rome, Italy
Tel.: (+39) 06 57054492
E-mail: luca.ceriola@fao.org

Nicoletta MILONE
AdriaMed
Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use
and Conservation Division (FIRF)
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 1
00153, Rome, Italy
Tel.: (+39) 06 57055467
E-mail: nicoletta.milone@fao.org

Mark DIMECH
Technical Officer
FAO EastMed
Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use
and Conservation Division (FIRF)
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 1
00153, Rome, Italy
E-mail: Mark.Dimech@fao.org

GFCM SECRETARIAT Palazzo Blumenstihl Via Vittoria Colonna 1 00193, Rome, Italy

Abdellah SROUR
Executive Secretary
General Fisheries Commission for the
Mediterranean
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
E-mail: abdellah.srou@fao.org

Miguel BERNAL
Fisheries Resources Officer
General Fisheries Commission for the
Mediterranean
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
E-mail: miguel.bernal@fao.org

Nicola FERRI
Legal and Institutional Officer
General Fisheries Commission for the
Mediterranean
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
Tel.: +39 06 57055766
E-mail: nicola.ferri@fao.org

Federico DE ROSSI
Data Compliance Officer
General Fisheries Commission for the
Mediterranean
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
E-mail: federico.derossi@fao.org

Roberto EMMA
Data Analyst
General Fisheries Commission for the
Mediterranean
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
E-mail: roberto.emma@fao.org

Olimpia SERMONTI
Consultant
General Fisheries Commission for the
Mediterranean
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
E-mail: olimpia.sermonti@fao.org

Lil KERHERVE
Intern
General Fisheries Commission for the
Mediterranean
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
E-mail: lil.kerherve@fao.org

OPENING STATEMENT BY JOSIP MARKOVIC
First Vice-Chairperson
Compliance Committee of the GFCM

Distinguished Delegates,
FAO Colleagues,
GFCM Executive Secretary, Mr Srouf,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you at the annual intersessional meeting of the CoC and thank you for your participation in this forum. Allow me to convey, at the opening of the meeting, the regards of the Chairperson, Mr Samir Majdalani, who could not be with us due to last-minute commitments. I am very pleased to assume the presidency of this meeting in his stead and stand ready to ensure continuity with his work. In this regard, I acknowledge that we have a high rate of participation, including the vast majority of GFCM contracting parties, all GFCM cooperating non-contracting parties and some GFCM non-contracting parties that have been actively cooperating with the Commission. This has become standard practice for the intersessional meetings of the CoC and the strong participation we witness in CoC activities underlines our political commitment to the efficiency of the committee in discharging its duties. Furthermore, it means that your countries are well aware of the need for regional cooperation in complying with the rules in place to safeguard Mediterranean and Black Sea marine living resources for present and future generations.

We have been living troubled times over the past couple of years, particularly in the Mediterranean Sea, due to thousands of people trying to seek refuge and better living standards away from their countries. As a result of this, and understandably so, several national law enforcement agencies in the region are overburdened and overstretched, trying to rescue people at sea rather than focusing on enforcing fisheries regulations, the vast majority of which emanates from GFCM recommendations. Despite this alarming situation, we are still working together to ensure that main problems experienced in complying with GFCM recommendations are duly addressed and common solutions are elaborated. Let me remind you that on occasion of World Fisheries Day, last 21 November, the FAO delivered a strong message aimed at promoting human rights and decent work in the fisheries sector. Among other topics, the message focused on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and its role as a catalyst for human rights violations, including pirate fishing, child labour and human trafficking. There is therefore a clear link between the work of the CoC and these topics. This explains why the role of the CoC is growing every year.

At the fortieth session of the Commission, it was explicitly recognized that – and I am quoting from the report of this session – “considering the increasing importance of the work carried out by the CoC on a number of fronts requiring specific expertise, the Commission decided to discontinue the practice of holding the annual CoC meeting during the regular session of the Commission”. As a result of this decision, and for the first time in the history of the GFCM, this intersessional meeting of the CoC will pave the way to a self-standing CoC meeting outside the remit of the session of the Commission. This will be organized in late June, most probably in this very venue. We therefore have a lot of work ahead of us to inform the decisions by the CoC at its annual meeting.

My personal expectation is that this year the CoC will be able to swiftly act upon the “legitimate” reasons for existent lack of compliance with GFCM recommendations. I am referring in particular to the requests for technical assistance lodged with this committee last year which might help to overcome hurdles and problems. There might be also some other reasons behind lack of compliance with GFCM recommendations, including inadequate political will or *force majeure*. Each situation requires a tailored solution and, although the CoC should be determined in identifying cases of non-compliance, we should refrain from penalizing those countries that genuinely strive to abide by the requirements of the GFCM. I believe that this committee is now in a position to move to a more operational level in that we have accomplished a lot recently and we are ready to prove that such a diverse region can succeed in ensuring the preservation of our common resources and ecosystems. To this end, I do look forward in particular to the discussions under agenda item 5 concerning the operationalization of technical assistance provision to contracting parties. Ensuring a level playing field means that we will have to be attentive to the problems of cooperating non-contracting parties too. There are now three of them and our common hope is to see these countries becoming fully-fledged contracting parties in the near future. This process can be facilitated by providing them with the required technical assistance and perhaps other countries will be in a position to follow a similar course of action. I am referring specifically to the Republic of Moldova that has recently filed a request to become cooperating non-contracting party, to be reviewed in these two days.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that, as long as we agree to take common and concerted actions together, we will be able to connect all the different dots and find strength in such diversity.

Thank you very much for your kind attention. I wish you success in your endeavours.

Josip Markovic
First Vice-Chairperson of the CoC

Status of implementation of GFCM decisions [as at January 2017]

GFCM DECISIONS	STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION															BIH	GEO	UKR
	ALB	DZA	EGY	EU	ISR	JPN	LBN	LBY	MCO	MNE	MAR	SYR	TUN	TUR				
Recommendation GFCM/38/2014/1 - Small pelagic stocks in GSA 17	IP	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	IP	n/a	n/a	
Recommendation GFCM/38/2014/2 - Identification of non-compliance	I	I	I	I	I	i	i	i	i	I	i	i	I	I	I	I	I	
Rec. GFCM/37/2013/1 - Multiannual management plan in the Adriatic Sea	IP	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	IP	n/a	n/a	
Rec. GFCM/37/2013/2 - On turbot and conservation of cetaceans in the Black Sea	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	IP	PI	
Rec. GFCM/36/2012/2 - Conservation of cetaceans	I	I	n/a	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	I	I	
Rec. GFCM/36/2012/3 - Conservation of sharks and rays	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	IP	I	I	I	PI	I	I	n/a	IP	IP	
Rec. GFCM/36/2012/1 and GFCM/35/2011/2 - Red coral	I	I	n/a	I	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	I	n/a	IP	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Res. GFCM/35/2011/1 - On the submission of combined data on fishing vessels	I	I	I	I	IP	I	NI	I	I	I	I	I	IP	I	IP	I	IP	
Rec. GFCM/35/2011/1 - Logbook	I	I	PI	I	NI	n/a	NI	I	n/a	I	I	I	I	I	n/a	I	IP	
Rec. GFCM/35/2011/3 - Bycatch of seabirds	n/a	I	I	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	I	I	PI	PI	IP	I	n/a	IP	NI	
Rec. GFCM/35/2011/4 - Bycatch of sea turtles	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Rec. GFCM/35/2011/5 - Conservation of the Monk seal	I	I	n/a	I	I	I	I	n/a	I	I	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Rec. GFCM/35/2011/6 - On reporting of aquaculture	I	I	I	PI	IP	n/a	I	PI	n/a	I	I	PI	I	I	I	I	I	
Rec. GFCM/34/2010/2 - On the management of fishing capacity	IP	I	I	I	I	n/a	I	PI	n/a	I	I	n/a	I	I	IP	n/a	n/a	
Rec. GFCM/33/2009/1 - Fisheries Restricted Area in the Gulf of Lion	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Rec. GFCM/33/2009/2 - Minimum mesh size in the codend of demersal trawl nets	I	I	I	I	I	I	n/a	I	n/a	I	I	I	IP	I	n/a	NI	I	
Rec. GFCM/33/2009/3 - Task 1	I	I	I	I	IP	n/a	I	PI	n/a	I	I	PI	I	I	IP	IP	PI	
Rec. GFCM/33/2009/7 - Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)	I	PI	IP	I	IP	I	n/a	PI	n/a	I	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	IP	PI	
Rec. GFCM/33/2009/8 - List of vessels IUU fishing	I	I	I	I	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	I	I	I	n/a	I	n/a	I	PI	
Rec. GFCM/2008/1 - Port State measures	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	I	I	PI	n/a	I	I	i	I	I	n/a	I	IP	
Rec. GFCM/2006/2 - Closed season dolphinfish fisheries based on fishing aggregation devices (FADs)	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Rec. GFCM/2006/3 - On the establishment of 3 Fisheries Restricted Areas	n/a	n/a	I	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Rec. GFCM/2005/1 - Trawl banning below 1000 m	I	I	n/a	I	n/a	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	I	I	n/a	I	I	n/a	n/a	n/a	

I Implemented
 PI Partly implemented
 IP Implementation in progress
 NI Not implemented
 n/a Not applicable
 NR Non reported

Appendix E

Status of data and information compliance: 2016 data [as at January 2017]

	ANNUAL REPORTING [2016]														ONE-SHOT REPORTING					
	Vessel records (2015)	Task 1 (2014)	Dolphin fish (2015)	Red Coral (2015)	Small pelagics Adriatic Sea Control programmes	Demersals in the Strait of Sicily		Piked dogfish in the Black sea		Turbot in the Black sea				Aquaculture production (2015)		Port State measure	VMS	IUU	Small pelagics Adriatic Sea	Demersals in the Strait of Sicily
						Fishing vessels	Fishing activities	Landing scheme	Fishing activities	Fishing vessels	Landing points	Fishing activities	National plans	Statistics	Centres					
						by 31 MAR	by 31 MAY	by 31 MAY	by 31 JAN	by 31 OCT	by 30 NOV	by 30 AUG	by GFCM Session	by WGMS session	by 31 JAN					
Albania	OK	NO	n/a	n/a	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	NO	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Algeria	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	NO	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	
Bulgaria	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Croatia	OK	OK	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Cyprus	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	OK	
Egypt	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	NO	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	
France	OK	OK	n/a	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	NO	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Greece	OK	OK	n/a	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Israel	NO	NO	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	NO	n/a	NO	OK	n/a	
Italy	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	NO	OK	OK	OK	OK	
Japan	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	n/a	n/a	
Lebanon	OK	NO	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	NO	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Libya	OK	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Malta	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
Monaco	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Montenegro	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	NO	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Morocco	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Romania	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Slovenia	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	
Spain	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	
Syria	NO	NO	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n	NO	NO	NO	n/a	NO	n/a	
Tunisia	OK	NO	OK	OK	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	NO	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Turkey	OK	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	NO	OK	OK	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NO	NO	n/a	n/a	NO	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	
Georgia	OK (>15m)	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NO	n/a	NO	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	n/a	
Ukraine	OK (>15m)	OK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	OK	n/a	OK	OK	OK	n/a	OK	OK	n/a	
	88%	75%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	80%	100%	50%	70%	61%	94%	96%	96%	83%	100%