

7th WG on IMP-Med, 21-23 Oct. 2014



The present and future role of GFCM in regional cooperation

By A. Srour, GFCM Executive Secretary

GFCM and regional cooperation - Foreword

- In accordance with Article VIII of the GFCM constitutive agreement, the Commission shall cooperate closely with other international organizations in matters of mutual interest
- The following presentation will describe the role of the GFCM in promoting regional cooperation in the Mediterranean under two parts:
 - An update on the amendment of the GFCM legal framework, including its implication on cooperation and
 - Ongoing cooperative initiatives currently involving the GFCM in the Mediterranean Sea

Strengthening the GFCM framework for cooperation

- On 20 May 2014 the Commission at its 38th Session endorsed by consensus a set of proposed amendments to the GFCM Agreement
- The amendments have been submitted to the CCLM of the FAO for consideration on Monday and are now being onforwarded to FAO Council for final approval (December)



Strengthening the GFCM framework for cooperation (cont.)

- The amendments were endorsed after a 5 year negotiating process that involved all relevant stakeholders (i.e. GFCM Members, interested non Members, IOs, NGOs, CSOs and colleagues of FAO)
- The bottom-up and participatory approach promoted by the GFCM throughout the process has resulted in the direct engagement of an high number of actors
- Salient points of the amended GFCM Agreement:
 - Recognition of the importance of socio-economic aspects for fisheries and aquaculture management (e.g. SSF, GES, multiannual management plans, etc.)
 - Adoption of a sub-regional approach, including by enhancing the role of GFCM in the Black Sea
 - Strengthened compliance and improved cooperation with States and organizations
 - Acknowledgment of the need of developing countries Members
 - Possibility to seek suitable arrangements for consultation, cooperation and collaboration with other relevant organizations and institutions
 - Greater flexibility to ensure the participation of observers

What to expect from the amended agreement?

- It will enhance an ecosystem approach to conservation and sustainable use of the living marine resources and the protection of the marine ecosystems in which they occur
- It will contribute to achieve blue growth and sustainable development
- It will bring about a level playing field among all States across the region
- It will build upon the contribution of all actors that are willing to engage in pursuing an integrated maritime policy

“Today we have a framework that looks for long-term conservation measures, adapts to the different sub-regions, is based on scientific advice and works in synergy with Regional Organisations. We also have an efficient framework against illegal fishing”

[Maria Damanaki, 20 May 2014, FAO HQ, Rome]

Cooperation is now...

The GFCM Framework Programme (2014-2018)



Governance



Data collection



Aquaculture



Small-Scale Fisheries



Subregional cooperation
and technical assistance

“A strategic, flexible and multiannual framework to support the objectives of the GFCM through strengthened cooperation with interested partners (i.e. States, IOs, NGOs, CSOs, etc.)”

Joint project agreements

- The GFCM has concluded four joint project agreements thus far with DG MARE linked to several areas of the Framework Programme
- Core activities carried out/being carried out/expected to be carried out:
 - Support to the definition and adoption of multiannual management plans at sub-regional level
 - Reinforcing data collection systems in view of the establishment of a new regional data collection reference framework
 - Fight against IUU fishing in order to deprive offenders of benefits accrued in training illegally caught fish
 - Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, including through the development of a centralized VMS and control system

Joint project agreements (cont.)

- The Italian Ministry of Environment and the GFCM concluded a joint project agreement aimed at fostering a synergic approach towards setting indicators and targets for a “good environmental status” for Descriptor 3 of the EU MSFD/Ecological Objective 3 of the UNEP-MAP Ied Ecosystem Approach Process
- The “First MedSuit Regional Workshop on indicators and targets to ensure GES of commercially exploited marine populations in the GFCM area” will take place on 6-7 November 2014 at the FAO HQ, Rome
- UNEP-MAP, Black Sea Commission and ICES are expected to participate and provide input to the discussions

Memoranda of Understanding

- As of 2012, the Commission has entered into Memoranda of Understanding with the following institutions:
 - ACCOBAMS
 - BLACK SEA Commission
 - EUROFISH
 - ICES
 - INFOSAMAK
 - IUCN
 - MEDPAN
 - RAC-MED
 - UNEP-MAP
 - WWF

Memoranda of Understanding (cont.)

- On the basis of a text negotiated together, the GFCM and the partner organizations single out areas of cooperation
- Based on the respective work programmes joint activities are agreed upon together and carried out
- Exchange of information, coordination and mutual participation in respective activities are envisaged
- Increased visibility as well as additional opportunities

THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

HORIZON 2020



Selected activities promoted by GFCM and partner organizations



On November 2013 a regional Symposium on Small-Scale Fisheries was organized in Malta by the GFCM together with several other partner organizations. 170 participants, including fishermen associations and professional stakeholders participated. The value of the activity was praised to the extent that work is now underway for a second regional meeting on Small-Scale Fisheries which is expected to be hosted on May 2015 in Algeria under the patronage of H. E. Sid Ahmed FERROUKHI.

[Call for partnership is still open.](#)

Selected activities promoted by GFCM and partner organizations (cont.)



On December 2014 the GFCM will organize together with FAO and in cooperation with CIHEAM, IUCN and Eurofish a high level conference on aquaculture in Bari, Italy. This event will be preceded by a meeting of the GFCM multi-stakeholder aquaculture platform, the toll foreseen by the Commission to facilitate interactions in actors interested in boosting the potential of this sector across the region

Active participation of GFCM in ongoing initiatives of relevance

- Last Summer the EU adopted a directive on Marine Spatial Planning
- Work was already ongoing at regional level thanks to the EU support
- ADRIPLAN Project: wide range of research institutes in the Adriatic – Ionian Macroregion tackling MSP
- GFCM was initially expected to join the Consortium as a partner
- Eventually the GFCM has opted for observer status
- GFCM participated on 13 January 2014 to the ADRIPLAN kick-off meeting in Venice, Italy
- The GFCM is following with interest the good progress being made and looks forward to further contribute in its capacity

Active participation of GFCM in ongoing initiatives of relevance

- Last Summer the EU also adopted its Marine Security Strategy for the global maritime domain
- In the Mediterranean basin, an important role is performed by the Mediterranean Coast Guard Function Forum
- 1-3 October 2014, Portugal: meeting of the forum in Faro
- GFCM participated and chaired a working group on fishery protection and control
- GFCM informed about the pilot study to test a GFCM centralized VMS and control system currently underway
- A training of inspectors should be carried out later this year by GFCM with the support of EFCA

Lessons learnt from cooperation – a GFCM perspective

- Over the past five years, that is since the launching of the negotiating process to modernize the GFCM, a significant effort has been made to improve cooperation
- GFCM has contributed to and benefited from a shift towards more synergies and joint undertakings
- This has resulted in optimization of resources, greater efficiency and functionality and avoiding duplications
- Cooperation is key to achieve an integrated maritime policy in the Mediterranean
- To this end, organizations such as GFCM that bridge the North and the South of the Mediterranean Sea have a paramount role to play

**Thank you for your
attention !**

