

**REC.CM-GFCM/39/2015/4**

**on management measures for piked dogfish in the Black Sea**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

*RECALLING* that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental levels, of living marine resources in the GFCM 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 (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 of application, including the Black Sea;

*TAKING INTO ACCOUNT* that, for piked dogfish in the geographical subarea (GSA) 29, the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) has concluded at its seventeenth session (FAO headquarters, March 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 provisions of Articles 5 (b), 8 (b) and 13 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 bycatch 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 (MSY) and to guaranteeing a low risk of stock 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 (CPCs) whose vessels have been actively fishing, directly or indirectly, piked dogfish in GSA 29 agree to implement common measures to achieve 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 29 as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2;
  - “Piked dogfish” (synonym: spiny dogfish) means shark 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 a 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” (FRA) 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 marine 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, transshipped, landed, stored, sold, displayed nor offered to sale. When accidentally caught, such specimens 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 and seasons**

9. The CPCs shall establish a database of FRAs 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 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 catch, release and/or discarding events for piked dogfish are recorded by the ship-owner 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 the SAC and through the GFCM Task 1 statistical matrix;
  - c. any additional measure is taken to improve data collection 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 characteristic that could effectively support the implementation of this recommendation, including entering into cooperative arrangements with other appropriate international bodies, notably the Black Sea Commission.
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.