

Recommendation GFCM/29/2005/1
on the management of certain fisheries exploiting demersal and deep-water species and the establishment of a fisheries restricted area below 1000 m

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 level, of marine living resources in the GFCM area of application;

RECALLING the 2003 Declaration of the Ministerial Conference on the Sustainable Development of Fisheries in the Mediterranean (2003 Venice Declaration) and in particular, paragraph 4, third indent;

RECALLING that effective management measures aim to curb the decline in stocks identified in the scientific advice and to improve the exploitation pattern in the fisheries;

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 approach to fishery management therein, in particular in relation to the development of new fisheries;

CONSIDERING that, in the absence of any scientific information on the status of fisheries and of the exploited resources, a more cautious approach is needed and that suitable information coming from adjacent areas could be used for proper and precautionary management of fisheries;

NOTING that the selectivity of codend mesh sizes currently in use in the various demersal trawl fisheries is not suitable to ensure adequate protection for juveniles of several species as well as to reduce discarding practices;

CONSIDERING also that, in the advice for 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) considered that certain stocks were overexploited, some with a high risk of collapse, and that sustainable management required that measures aimed at limiting the capture of juveniles be implemented;

NOTING that the stock assessment conducted by the SAC only concerns specific GFCM geographical subareas (GSAs) corresponding to the data supplied by certain contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) and that the assessed stocks may be shared with adjacent GSAs;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/27/2002/1 on the management of selected demersal and small pelagic species, which urges the control of fishing effort and the improvement of the exploitation pattern of demersal fisheries, as well as limiting catches of juveniles of small pelagic species;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of GFCM Agreement, the following recommendation:

DEMERSAL FISHERIES

1. CPCs shall adopt measures aimed at increasing the selectivity of demersal trawl nets, notably by the immediate implementation of, at least, a 40 mm mesh size opening for the whole demersal trawl codend. CPCs are invited to explore and implement additional measures in order to improve further the selectivity.

DEEP-WATER FISHERIES

2. CPCs shall prohibit the use of towed dredges and trawl nets at depths beyond 1 000 m.

GENERAL ASPECTS

3. CPCs shall notify the GFCM Executive Secretary, each year, one month prior to the GFCM annual session, with a report on the implementation of the management measures adopted.
4. The SAC shall evaluate the impact of the implementation of the management measures and recommend to the GFCM, if necessary, either possible adjustments or new additional measures.