Recommendation GFCM/30/2006/2

on the establishment of a closed season for common dolphinfish fisheries using fish aggregating devices

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);

NOTING that the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) recommends that fisheries exploiting common dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) and using fish aggregating devices (FADs), could operate in all GFCM geographical subareas (GSAs) only between 15 August and 31 December of each year;

NOTING that the SAC has considered that this type of measure can significantly contribute to the reduction of the catches of small specimen of common dolphinfish and contribute to the sustainability of this stock;

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

1.   In order to protect the common dolphinfish, in particular small fish, exploited by fleets flying the flag of contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs), common dolphinfish fisheries using FADs shall be prohibited from 1 January to 14 August of each year, in all GSAs.

By way of derogation, if a CPC can demonstrate that, due to bad weather, fishers of this CPC were unable to utilise their normal fishing days (notified in advance to the GFCM Executive Secretary), then the CPC can carry over days lost by this fleet in FAD fisheries until 31 January of the following year.

The CPC shall notify these measures to the GFCM Executive Secretary, who will circulate the information to all the CPCs.

2.   Each CPC involved by the fishery referred to in paragraph 1 shall take the necessary measures to ensure the respect of the measure referred to in paragraph 1.

3.   Each CPC shall adopt the necessary measures to ensure the reporting of their total landings and transshipments of common dolphinfish carried out by vessels that fly their flag. Each CPC shall also expand, or maintain, an appropriate system of collection and treatment of fisheries catch and effort data.

4.   The GFCM requests the SAC to analyse, for the first time in 2010, the impact of this measure on the stocks and to recommend any change that may be deemed necessary to improve its effectiveness, in order to evaluate possible modifications to the closure and/or propose additional management measures.

5.   CPCs involved in the fishery referred to in paragraph 1 shall submit their national data (as specified in Annex 1) to the GFCM Secretariat not later than 31 July of each calendar year. Such transmission shall be done in accordance with appropriate data submission standards and protocols set by the GFCM Secretariat and address the timeframe of the year preceding the submission.

Annex 1

The data variables below are those requested to be submitted to the GFCM Secretariat following the guidance as defined by the SAC in the Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF) manual, including fields definition.

DATA FIELDS	MANDATORY (X)	DATA CONFIDENTIALITY STATUS*
Country	X	P
Reference year	X	P
Fishing period	X	P
Geographical subarea (GSA)	X	P
Total landing	X	P
Number of vessels	X	P
Total GT of vessels		P
Length range of vessels (m)		P
Average length of vessels (m)		P
Total number of FADs		S
Total number of fishing trips		S
Number of FADs targeted per fishing trip		S
Number of FADs visited per fishing trip		S
Average size of fish caught during the fishing season		S
Total transshipments		S
System of collection and treatment of catch and effort data		S

* In line with the GFCM data confidentiality policy and procedures, the "data confidentiality status" identifies the access-level criteria for the sake of data dissemination: Public (P), Semi-private (S), Private (R)