

Resolution GFCM/43/2019/1
on the mapping of measures applicable to fisheries restricted areas in the
GFCM area of application

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;

CONSIDERING that all measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

HAVING REGARD to Article 8 b) ii) of the GFCM Agreement “to minimize impacts of fishing activities on marine living resources and their ecosystems”;

HAVING REGARD to Article 8 b) iv) of the GFCM Agreement “to establish fisheries restricted areas [FRAs] for the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems [VMEs], including but not limited to nursery and spawning areas [...]”;

RECALLING Resolution GFCM/40/2016/2 for a mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries, particularly its Target 4, Output 4.2 a) on “the promotion of the identification and establishment of new FRAs to protect priority areas within ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), VMEs, etc. from harmful fishing activities, and the implementation of monitoring and control systems to ensure the efficiency of these spatial measures, also in relation to Target 3”;

RECALLING the 2017 Malta MedFish4Ever Ministerial Declaration, in particular its paragraph 38, as well as 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 metres, Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/1 on the establishment of a fisheries restricted area in the Gulf of Lion to protect spawning aggregations and deep-sea sensitive habitats, Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/3 on the establishment of a fisheries restricted area in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit in the Adriatic Sea and Recommendation GFCM/30/2006/3 on the establishment of fisheries restricted areas to protect the deep-sea sensitive habitats;

NOTING the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.5 that specifically calls for conserving at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law;

UNDERLINING that FRAs are recognized as an area-based management tool that contributes to the maintenance and/or recovery of marine living resources to a healthy state and to the conservation of marine biodiversity, which is important for sustainable exploitation within an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, and that the GFCM has already taken action in this regard through the establishment of FRAs;

NOTING the importance of enhanced monitoring of these areas;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the conclusions of the Working Group on VMS and related Control Systems held in Albania in July 2019;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5 and 8 of the GFCM Agreement, the following resolution:

1. In 2019, the GFCM Secretariat should establish a mapping of all existing conservation measures and monitoring control and surveillance (MCS) measures that are currently in force and implemented in the FRAs established by the GFCM in its area of application.

2. On the basis of such mapping, the Working Group on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the Mediterranean and Black Sea should establish a report assessing these measures in 2020.
3. This report should be communicated to the contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties before the sessions of the Compliance Committee (CoC) and the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries for their consideration in 2020.