

**Resolution GFCM/43/2019/7**  
**amending Resolution GFCM/41/2017/3 on the reactivation of the Working Group on Fishing Technology**

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, in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, there remains a high level of catch of juvenile fish and bycatch of unwanted fish species, as well as incidental catch of vulnerable and sensitive marine species such as marine mammals, seabirds and marine reptiles;

*FURTHER CONSIDERING* that appropriate mitigation measures should be adopted so to minimise and, where possible, eliminate catch of such species by fishing gear and not to threaten their conservation status;

*ACKNOWLEDGING* that increasing the selectivity of fishing gear would help mitigate this adverse impact and help achieve the objectives of the GFCM Agreement;

*RECALLING* Resolution GFCM/41/2017/3 on the reactivation of the Working Group on Fishing Technology;

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

1. The Working Group on Fishing Technology (WGFiT) should hold a meeting in 2020.
2. The 2020 meeting of the WGFiT should establish a draft work programme spanning over three to five years and submit it to the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) for adoption.
3. The terms of reference for such meeting are provided in Annex 1 of this resolution.
4. On the basis of the report prepared by 2020 meeting of WGFiT, the twenty-second session of the SAC should adopt the work programme prepared by the WGFiT and advise the GFCM on suitable selectivity measures that may be implemented as soon as possible, and preferably by 2021, for selected fisheries and gear, while taking into account relevant socio-economic considerations.
5. The forty-fourth session of the GFCM should review the measures advised by the SAC and consider adopting suitable selectivity and mitigation measures to minimise and, where possible, eliminate the catch of juvenile fish and bycatch of unwanted fish species, as well as incidental catch of vulnerable and sensitive marine species such as marine mammals, seabirds and marine reptiles.
6. The GFCM should designate a coordinator for the WGFiT and for the 2020 WGFiT meeting. The tasks of the coordinator of the 2020 WGFiT meeting are listed in Annex 2.

**Terms of reference for the 2020 WGFiT meeting**

1. The objective of the 2020 WGFiT meeting is to advise the SAC on concrete and directly implementable selectivity measures that would allow mitigating the adverse effects of fisheries on:
  - juvenile fish;
  - bycatch of unwanted fish species; and
  - incidental catch of vulnerable and sensitive species, such as seabirds, cetaceans and marine reptiles.
2. The WGFiT should base its advice on the results of past and ongoing selectivity studies undertaken by GFCM contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties and on any other scientific information pertinent to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.
3. The outcomes of the WGFiT should aim at maximizing the impact of the proposed measures focusing on:
  - the priority species listed in the GFCM mid-term strategy (2017–2020), in particular those with poorest conservation status according to the latest SAC advice;
  - fishing gear responsible for most catches in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;
  - fishing gear having most impact on juvenile fish and bycatch of unwanted fish species, as well as on the incidental catch of vulnerable and sensitive marine species such as marine mammals, seabirds and marine reptiles; and
  - fishing gear for which scientific knowledge is mature enough to rapidly translate into selectivity devices fitted to the fishing gear, including acoustic deterrent devices and other technical means to prevent the incidental catch of vulnerable and sensitive marine species such as marine mammals, seabirds and marine reptiles.

**Terms of reference for the WGFiT coordinator in 2020**

1. Draft the agenda of the 2020 WGFiT meeting, on the basis of the terms of reference included in Annex 1 of the present resolution.
2. Identify relevant experts and ongoing projects in the region and secure their participation in the meeting, as well as their relevant contribution (presentations).
3. Prepare relevant meeting documents, including background documents.
4. Chair the 2020 meeting of the WGFiT.
5. Coordinate the elaboration and presentation of meeting conclusions, including the preparation of relevant recommendations for the consideration of the SAC (in line with the terms of reference of the 2020 WGFiT meeting).