

Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/6

on a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Levant Sea (geographical subareas 24 to 27), amending Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/3

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING 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 Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/3 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Levant Sea (geographical subareas 24, 25, 26 and 27);

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/4 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Ionian Sea (geographical subareas 19, 20 and 21);

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/6 on management measures for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16);

NOTING that for deep-water red shrimp in the eastern-central Mediterranean, the joint MedSudMed/EastMed/GFCM data preparation meeting held in October 2019 noted numerous technical issues to be resolved and further explored prior to the provision of scientific advice and the forthcoming benchmark in 2022, namely in relation to data quality, misreporting of the geographical subarea of origin, identification of fishing grounds and stock assessment methodologies;

CONSIDERING that it is appropriate to align measures for deep-water red shrimp in the Levant Sea and the Ionian Sea to those adopted in the Strait of Sicily;

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

Amendment of Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/3

1. Paragraph 12 of Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/3 shall be amended as follows:

A GFCM working group shall be established in 2022, 30 calendar days following the twenty-third session of the SAC, in order to develop measures for the management of the key species listed in Annex 1, taking into consideration the efforts made by CPCs to manage relevant fisheries as well as the amount of historical catches, towards the identification and application, in some cases, of stricter rules than those defined in this recommendation, also based on socio-economic considerations.

2. Paragraph 16 of Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/3 shall be amended as follows:

At its forty-fifth session in 2022, the GFCM shall adopt long-term management measures allowing for the achievement of the objectives set out in paragraph 1, in complement to or in replacement of the measures referred to in Part IV.

Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/7

on management measures for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16), amending Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/6

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

CONSIDERING 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 that, in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall adopt recommendations on conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishing activities, in order to preserve marine living resources and the economic and social viability of fisheries and that, in adopting such recommendations, the GFCM shall give particular attention to measures to prevent overfishing and minimize discards as well as to the potential impacts on small-scale fisheries and local communities;

RECALLING that in giving effect to the objective of the GFCM Agreement, the GFCM shall foster, as appropriate, a subregional approach to fisheries management and aquaculture development in order to better address the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall adopt management measures based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries to guarantee the maintenance of stocks at levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

RECALLING the United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks of 4 August 1995, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas;

CONSIDERING that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that states “should apply a precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, taking account of the best scientific evidence available. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take measures to conserve target species, associated or dependent species and non-target species and their environment”;

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;

RECALLING that the 2017 Malta MedFish4Ever Ministerial Declaration calls upon Mediterranean riparian countries to enhance multilateral cooperation and implement actions to improve the sustainability of resources, particularly with regard to data collection and scientific advice, the implementation of an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework, compliance and elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, support to sustainable small-scale fisheries and aquaculture and greater solidarity and coordination;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/7 on a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application;

CONSIDERING the advice of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries at its twenty-first session (Egypt, June 2019) to extend precautionary management measures contained in Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/3 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Levant Sea (geographical subareas 24, 25, 26 and 27) and in Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/4 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Ionian Sea (geographical subareas 19, 20 and 21);

CONSIDERING that fishing mortality should be kept below safe thresholds to ensure high long-term yields while limiting the risk of stocks collapse and guaranteeing stable and more viable fisheries;

CONSIDERING the socio-economic importance of fisheries and the need to ensure their sustainability;

CONSIDERING that certain fisheries management measures need to be revised and adapted to the evolution of both the status of exploited stocks and scientific knowledge and that an appropriate method shall be established to this end;

CONSIDERING the need to improve scientific advice by 2022;

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

Amendment of Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/6

1. Paragraph 23 of Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/6 shall be amended as follows:

Precautionary management measures shall be extended until 2022. At its forty-fifth session in 2022, the GFCM shall adopt long-term management measures allowing for the achievement of the objectives set out in paragraph 1, in complement to or in replacement of the measures referred to in Part III.