

## Resolution GFCM/44/2021/1

### on the reporting of information on non-indigenous species used in aquaculture

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, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the GFCM area of application;

*RECOGNIZING* the important contribution of aquaculture to economic development and its essential role as a source of food and income for coastal the communities of the contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs);

*CONSISTENT WITH* the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in particular its Article 9, which, *inter alia*, requires states to develop and regularly update strategies and plans, as required, with a view to ensuring that the development of aquaculture is environmentally sustainable and to enabling the rational use of shared resources between aquaculture and other activities;

*RECALLING* the outcome document *The Future We Want* of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Brazil, June 2012) that reaffirmed the need to promote, enhance and support a more sustainable aquaculture that ensures food security and nutrition, provides for the livelihoods of millions of people and is economically viable, while conserving land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and enhancing resilience to climate change and natural disasters;

*CONSIDERING* the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 14 “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources” and Target 14.7 “By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism”;

*ACKNOWLEDGING* the 2017 Malta MedFish4Ever Ministerial Declaration that commits signatories to implement actions in support of sustainable aquaculture development to contribute to food security and to strengthen coastal economies, and to implement, as from 2017, the GFCM Strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture supporting, *inter alia*, the sustainable farming of food fish products and enhanced market access and trade environment, thereby creating employment opportunities and reducing the current stress on marine capture fisheries;

*FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING* Resolution GFCM/41/2017/1 on a strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture, in particular its Target 2 “Enhance interactions between aquaculture and the environment while ensuring animal health and welfare” which recalls the importance of having procedures in place to regulate the introduction of non-indigenous species and other locally-absent species;

*RECALLING* the GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, in particular its Target 3 “Aquaculture: a sustainable and resilient sector growing to its full potential”;

*RECOGNIZING* that existing lengthy and cumbersome aquaculture consenting systems hinder the development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and that streamlining aquaculture licensing and leasing procedures is a priority;

*TAKING INTO ACCOUNT* the possible environmental risks associated with aquaculture activities and the need to control adverse environmental and social interactions while ensuring mitigation measures to offset any negative externality;

*NOTING* the need to adopt a common terminology related to assessing and minimizing the possible impacts of the use of non-indigenous species in aquaculture;

*ACKNOWLEDGING* the need to support farmers and potential investors in aquaculture towards the diversification of farmed species;

*RECOGNIZING* the importance of monitoring, data availability and coordination among the various bodies responsible for aquaculture-related matters;

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

## **PART I**

### **General objectives and definitions**

#### ***General objectives***

1. This resolution establishes a framework for the establishment by contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPC) of a national list of non-indigenous species and species already used in aquaculture and for its submission to the Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (SIPAM) on an annual basis.
2. The national list referred to in paragraph 1 should include the information reported in Part II.
3. Each flag CPC shall increase efforts towards monitoring and reporting in order to assess and minimize the possible impacts of the use of non-indigenous species in aquaculture.

#### ***Definitions***

4. For the purpose of this resolution, the following definitions should apply:
  - a) “Non-indigenous species” means any live specimen of a species and subspecies of aquatic organisms introduced outside its known natural range and the area of its natural dispersal potential.

- b) “Species that are already present” means any transfauned and acclimated species that have been introduced in the past and that: i) do not cause any harm to biodiversity, natural habitats, ecosystems nor related ecosystem services; ii) are commonly used in aquaculture practices, including capture-based aquaculture; ii) are a usual target of capture fisheries; and iv) are of importance for local economies and traditions.

## **PART II**

### **Required information on non-indigenous species**

5. Each CPC shall send to the GFCM Secretariat every year the national list of non-indigenous species according to the following table:

<b>Species</b>	<b>Date of introduction</b>	<b>Type of culture</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Rationale for introduction</b>	<b>Annual production volume</b>

## **PART III**

### **Final provisions**

6. The application of this resolution shall not prejudice the adoption by CPCs of any other provision or regulation that could imply stricter requirements and obligations in relation to species diversification.
7. This resolution shall enter into force at the latest on 1 January 2023.