

Resolution GFCM/44/2021/9

on the implementation of an electronic logbook

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 the high level of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities in the GFCM area of application and the need for an adequate monitoring of the catches;

CONSIDERING Resolution GFCM/38/2014/1 on guidelines on vessel monitoring system and related control systems in the GFCM area of application;

RECALLING Resolution GFCM/43/2019/3 on the implementation of a vessel monitoring system and an electronic logbook in the GFCM area of application;

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;

FURTHER RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1 concerning the establishment of a GFCM logbook, amending Recommendation GFCM/34/2010/1;

CONSIDERING the commitments made under the 2017 Malta MedFish4Ever Ministerial Declaration and of the 2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture;

RECOGNIZING that the operationalization of a centralized vessel monitoring system (VMS) and related control system, including information deriving from this system, supports enhanced assessment of fisheries stocks and the identification of fishing grounds and fishing activities, thus contributing to the objectives of the GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;

CONSIDERING that the technology used to ensure the electronic reporting of catches, the electronic logbook, has reached an adequate level of development to be operationalized, as demonstrated in various other regional fisheries management organizations around the world;

RECALLING the conclusions of the second meeting of the Working Group on Fishing Technology (online, April 2021) on advances in fishing gear technology to improve the selectivity and rational exploitation of fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea;

NOTING the conclusions of the fourteenth session of the Compliance Committee (CoC) (online, May 2021) and the Working Group on VMS and Related Control Systems (WGVMS) (online, May 2021);

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

PART I Objective

1. The objective of this resolution is to provide terms of reference for two voluntary pilot projects aimed at testing the feasibility of the establishment of an electronic logbook/electronic reporting system (ERS) in the GFCM area of application:

- a) The first pilot project should, in particular, be based on the experience and results of a centralized ERS, as described in Parts II and III.
- b) The second pilot project should, in particular, be based on the experience and results of a decentralized or regionalized ERS, as described in Parts II and IV.

2. Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) may, on a voluntary basis, implement the pilot projects referred to in paragraph 1 to test the feasibility of the establishment of an ERS within the GFCM area of application.

PART II

General terms of reference

3. The general terms of reference are applicable to CPCs participating in the voluntary pilot projects referred to in Parts III and IV, without prejudice to the provisions of Recommendation GFCM/35/2011/1.

4. Each participating CPC shall transmit to the GFCM Secretariat a list of fishing vessels participating in one of the pilot projects mentioned in paragraph 1. Each modification to this vessel list shall be communicated to the GFCM Secretariat without delay.

5. Each participating CPC shall implement an ERS for its commercial fishing vessels listed in accordance with paragraph 4, in conformity with the requirements laid down in this resolution, without prejudice to stricter obligations CPCs may have engaged in.

6. Each participating CPCs shall require that the masters of participating fishing vessels record and transmit, by electronic means, data on their activities, indicating in particular the quantities above 50 kg in live weight of each species caught and kept on board, whether the catches are weighed or estimated, the date and geographical positions of such catches and the type of gear used, in accordance with the minimum information set out in Annex 1.

7. The minimum quantity referred to in paragraph 6 shall be without prejudice to stricter rules implemented by CPCs, which may define a lower threshold between 0 and 50 kg in the light of further work to be undertaken within the GFCM framework.

8. The masters of participating vessels shall be responsible for the accuracy of the electronic data referred to in paragraph 6, which shall be transmitted at least once a day to the relevant authority. These data shall also be transmitted at the request of the competent authority of the flag state, and after the last fishing operation has been completed and before entering port.

9. The masters of participating fishing vessels that electronically record and report data on their fishing activities shall be exempt by the CPCs from the obligation to complete in paper format a fishing logbook, a landing declaration and a transshipment declaration.

10. The CPCs shall take all necessary measures to ensure that the relevant authority is equipped with computer hardware and software enabling automatic data processing and electronic data transmission to complete the electronic logbooks with the data transmitted by the master.

11. In case of system failures, the CPCs shall provide back-up procedures and the master of the affected vessel shall transmit a bound logbook to the relevant authority, in accordance with the minimum information set out in Annex 1.

12. The competent authorities of a coastal state shall accept electronic reports, in respect of a fishing vessel, containing the data referred to in paragraph 6 and received from or made available by the relevant authority.

PART III **Specificities of a centralized pilot project**

13. This part shall apply to any CPC and their respective fishing vessels participating in the centralized ERS pilot project.

14. Within a centralized ERS, the GFCM Secretariat should serve as the relevant authority as mentioned in Part II. As such, the masters of fishing vessels operating under the conditions of the centralized pilot project shall transmit their electronic logbook data to the GFCM Secretariat.

15. As such, the GFCM Secretariat shall establish and maintain a database for the purpose of receiving and storing any electronic logbook data. The GFCM Secretariat shall use the data received to complete the electronic logbook of the fishing vessel concerned and ensure that any information transmitted to and stored by the GFCM Secretariat pursuant to this resolution is maintained in strict accordance with the provisions of Resolution GFCM/35/2011/2 on data confidentiality policy and procedures, amending Resolution GFCM/30/2006/1.

16. In order to ensure consistent data collection and sharing throughout the GFCM area of application, the GFCM Secretariat shall provide flag state CPCs with real-time access to any data involving their vessels and/or coastal state CPCs with real-time access to any data involving waters under their jurisdiction.

17. Whenever the GFCM Secretariat does not receive expected data or has reasons to doubt about the correctness of the data it has received, it shall notify the flag state. The flag state shall notify the masters and owners/licensees of fishing vessels subject to ERS, or their representatives, as soon as possible and, where appropriate, shall investigate the matter in order to establish whether any data has been tampered with. In carrying out its duties as a flag state it shall take due consideration of Article 19 of 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 outcomes of such investigation, including any action taken by the flag state (e.g. fines, withdrawal of fishing license and legal proceedings) shall be forwarded to the GFCM Secretariat for consideration/action.

PART IV **Specificities of a decentralized pilot project**

18. This part shall apply to any CPC and their respective fishing vessels participating in the decentralized or regionalized ERS pilot project.

19. Within a decentralized ERS, the flag state's fisheries monitoring centre (FMC) should serve as the relevant authority as mentioned in Part II. As such, the masters of a participating fishing vessel operating under the conditions of the decentralized pilot project shall transmit their electronic logbook data directly to their flag State's FMC. The flag state shall use the data received to complete the electronic logbook of the fishing vessel.

20. In order to ensure consistent data gathering and sharing throughout the GFCM area of application, FMCs shall transmit their electronic logbook data to the GFCM Secretariat on a regular basis and shall use the FLUX standard where possible. The GFCM shall provide flag state CPCs with real-time access to any data involving their vessels and/or coastal state CPCs with real-time access to any data involving their waters.

21. The GFCM Secretariat shall establish and maintain a database for the purposes of receiving and storing any electronic logbook data transmitted by the FMCs. It shall ensure that any information transmitted by the FMCs and stored by the GFCM Secretariat pursuant to this resolution is maintained in strict accordance with the provisions of Resolution GFCM/35/2011/2 on data confidentiality policy and procedures, amending Resolution GFCM/30/2006/.

22. Each CPC shall notify the name, address, email and telephone numbers of the relevant authorities of their FMC to the GFCM Secretariat before the start of the pilot project. Each CPC shall also notify to the GFCM Secretariat, without delay, any changes in these contacts. The GFCM Secretariat shall draw and maintain a list of contacts based on the information received from the CPCs and shall take the necessary steps to publicize this information.

23. Whenever the FMCs do not receive the expected data or have reasons to doubt the about correctness of the data they have received, they shall notify the masters and owners/licensees of the fishing vessels subject to ERS and the national authorities, as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the CPCs shall investigate the matter in order to establish whether any data has been tampered with. In carrying out their duties as flag states, they shall take due consideration of Article 19 of the UN Fish stocks agreement. The outcome of this investigation, including any action taken by the flag state (e.g. fines, withdrawal of fishing license, legal proceedings), shall be forwarded to the GFCM Secretariat for consideration/action.

PART V **Final provisions**

24. The pilot projects shall be launched by the end of 2022 and shall have a minimum duration of one year.

25. After the conclusion of the pilot projects, the GFCM Secretariat shall present to the WGVMS, before the next session of the CoC, a final report on the implementation of the pilot projects as well as a cost evaluation of both pilot projects. Based on this final report, the WGVMS shall advise during the CoC on a list of recommendations on the future implementation of ERS in the GFCM area of application.

Minimum information to be reported in the GFCM electronic logbook

1. Minimum standard information for the GFCM electronic logbook:
 - a) name(s) and address(es) of the master(s);
 - b) date and time of departure and return from/to port;
 - c) vessel name, call-sign, vessel registration number and IMO number (if available);
 - d) fishing gear (FAO code and units) and their dimension, mesh size and number of hooks;
 - e) operations at sea, with at least one line per day of trip, providing:
 - i) the activity (fishing, steaming, etc.);
 - ii) the position, including geographical positions recorded for each fishing operation, or at noon when no fishing has been conducted during this day, as well as GFCM geographical subarea and/or the number of the rectangle 30'x30' of the GFCM statistical grid;
 - iii) the numbers of a rectangle in the GFCM statistical grid is a five digit code as reported in Annex 2, identified by the following rule:
 - the latitude is covered by a three-digit code composed of a letter and two numbers with a maximum range from M00 (30°N) up to M34 (47°30'N);
 - the longitude is covered by a code composed of a letter from A to J and a number from 0 to 9 with a maximum range from A0 (6°W) up to J5 (42°E).
 - iv) the record of catches by species;
 - f) species identification:
 - i) by FAO code;
 - ii) round weight in kg per day for all species; and
 - iii) number of fish caught per day (only for tuna, swordfish, and highly migratory shark); and
 - g) means of weight measure: estimation, weighing on board and/or counting of containers (boxes, baskets, etc.).
2. Minimum information in case of landing and/or transshipment:
 - a) date, time and port of landing and/or transshipment;
 - b) products:
 - i) species;
 - ii) presentation;

- iii) number of fish or containers and quantity in kg;
- c) vessel details (transshipment), including name, call-sign, markings, flag and any other characteristics;
- d) country and port of destination of the receiving vessel; and
- e) the permitted margin of tolerance of 10 percent that shall be expressed as a percentage of the actual determined live weight equivalent of each species retained on board.

Digits for the codification of the rectangles in the statistical grid

Latitude

Digit 1-3		
code	from	to
M00	30°N	30°30'N
M01	30°30'N	31°N
M02	31°N	31°30'N
M03	31°30'N	32°N
M04	32°N	32°30'N
M05	32°30'N	33°N
M06	33°N	33°30'N
M07	33°30'N	34°N
M08	34°N	34°30'N
M09	34°30'N	35°N
M10	35°N	35°30'N
M11	35°30'N	36°N
M12	36°N	36°30'N
M13	36°30'N	37°N
M14	37°N	37°30'N
M15	37°30'N	38°N
M16	38°N	38°30'N
M17	38°30'N	39°N
M18	39°N	39°30'N
M19	39°30'N	40°N
M20	40°N	40°30'N
M21	40°30'N	41°N

M22	41°N	41°30'N
M23	41°30'N	42°N
M24	42°N	42°30'N
M25	42°30'N	43°N
M26	43°N	43°30'N
M27	43°30'N	44°N
M28	44°N	44°30'N
M29	44°30'N	45°N
M30	45°N	45°30'N
M31	45°30'N	46°N
M32	46°N	46°30'N
M33	46°30'N	47°N
M34	47°N	47°30'N

Longitude

Digit 4-5		
code	from	to
A0	6°W	5°30'W
A1	5°30'W	5°W
A2	5°W	4°30'W
A3	4°30'W	4°W
A4	4°W	3°30'W
A5	3°30'W	3°W
A6	3°W	2°30'W
A7	2°30'W	2°W
A8	2°W	1°30'W
A9	1°30'W	1°W
B0	1°W	0°30'W
B1	0°30'W	0°W
B2	0°E	0°30'E
B3	0°30'E	1°E
B4	1°E	1°30'E
B5	1°30'E	2°E
B6	2°E	2°30'E
B7	2°30'E	3°E
B8	3°E	3°30'E
B9	3°30'E	4°E
C0	4°E	4°30'E
C1	4°30'E	5°E
C2	5°E	5°30'E
C3	5°30'E	6°E
C4	6°E	6°30'E
C5	6°30'E	7°E
C6	7°E	7°30'E
C7	7°30'E	8°E
C8	8°E	8°30'E
C9	8°30'E	9°E
D0	9°E	9°30'E
D1	9°30'E	10°E
D2	10°E	10°30'E
D3	10°30'E	11°E
D4	11°E	11°30'E
D5	11°30'E	12°E

Digit 4-5		
code	from	to
D6	12°E	12°30'E
D7	12°30'E	13°E
D8	13°E	13°30'E
D9	13°30'E	14°E
E0	14°E	14°30'E
E1	14°30'E	15°E
E2	15°E	15°30'E
E3	15°30'E	16°E
E4	16°E	16°30'E
E5	16°30'E	17°E
E6	17°E	17°30'E
E7	17°30'E	18°E
E8	18°E	18°30'E
E9	18°30'E	19°E
F0	19°E	19°30'E
F1	19°30'E	20°E
F2	20°E	20°30'E
F3	20°30'E	21°E
F4	21°E	21°30'E
F5	21°30'E	22°E
F6	22°E	22°30'E
F7	22°30'E	23°E
F8	23°E	23°30'E
F9	23°30'E	24°E
G0	24°E	24°30'E
G1	24°30'E	25°E
G2	25°E	25°30'E
G3	25°30'E	26°E
G4	26°E	26°30'E
G5	26°30'E	27°E
G6	27°E	27°30'E
G7	27°30'E	28°E
G8	28°E	28°30'E
G9	28°30'E	29°E
H0	29°E	29°30'E
H1	29°30'E	30°E

Digit 4-5		
code	from	to
H2	30°E	30°30'E
H3	30°30'E	31°E
H4	31°E	31°30'E
H5	31°30'E	32°E
H6	32°E	32°30'E
H7	32°30'E	33°E
H8	33°E	33°30'E
H9	33°30'E	34°E
I0	34°E	34°30'E
I1	34°30'E	35°E
I2	35°E	35°30'E
I3	35°30'E	36°E
I4	36°E	36°30'E
I5	36°30'E	37°E
I6	37°E	37°30'E
I7	37°30'E	38°E
I8	38°E	38°30'E
I9	38°30'E	39°E
J0	39°E	39°30'E
J1	39°30'E	40°E
J2	40°E	40°30'E
J3	40°30'E	41°E
J4	41°E	41°30'E
J5	41°30'E	42°E