

Minutes SAC meeting
24-26 June 2019, Cairo

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24 JUNE

National reports

Valerie Lainé (EC): very useful tool to collect all the data, but a lot of data are missing such as incidental catches. We have to identify the problem and the CPCs have to be aware, it is very important to have a full analysis of the quality of data and make an effort to raise the gap.

Miguel Bernal (GFCM): should we continue receiving national reports or should be focused on data that is compulsory by each CPCs? Is it necessary the national report or it's better to present it each year at the Sub Regional Committees? The list of national MPA or FRA is collected by the SRC.

SAC Chair: We have to continue presenting the summary of the national report, some of the data is not presented in the DCRF. So it has been decided to keep the national reports.

DCRF data collection and data quality

1: Data on fishing activities: selection of fleet segments (Rec. GFCM/41/2017/6)

Transmission status of the selection **GSA-Segments** occurred in 2019:

- 9 CPCs without changes;
- 3 CPCs with changes (Croatia 4, Italy 17, Spain 17);
- 6 CPCs did not transmitted information (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Libya, Syria, Tunisia)

2: Feasibility phase for the implementation of fisheries quality indicators on the DCRF online platform

- 5 Fisheries quality indicators: Timeliness, completeness, conformity, stability and consistency
- 188 National datasets (65 323 data rows) for the reference year 2017 Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/6

CONCLUSIONS

✓ Differences in data quality across the array of data topics (DCRF tasks/subtasks) and countries (GFCM subregions).

✓ Timeliness is an important issue in terms of responsibility of CPCs in transmitting their national data to the GFCM according to existing obligations.

✓ Completeness presents some problematic situations in its check for the combination of GSA-Segment.

✓ Consistency, the most complex check, presents several critical points in the quality assessment with the highest number of quality issues.

Coordinated actions between GFCM and CPCs have to be bolstered in order to ensure joint efforts on completeness and consistency checks particularly, since a high level of the related issues affects the overall quality of fisheries data in support of the formulation of sound scientific advice by relevant GFCM subsidiary bodies.

3: Harmonization of existing GFCM recommendations with the DCRF data reporting requirements

✓ An analysis of recurring data submission obligations in line with existing GFCM recommendations, and not in the DCRF, was carried out with the view of ensuring the harmonization with DCRF data reporting requirements, including online transmission procedures

✓ A proposal for amending the DCRF manual by adding a new task (“Subregional topics”) was advanced.

4: Revision of classification of fishing gears (CWP) (fishing effort in Rec. GFCM/41/2017/6)

✓ In light of the progress made by the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), the list of fishing gears was reviewed in line with the International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Gear (ISSCFG)

✓ Need for amending the DCRF manual Annex 3 “Effort measurement by fishing gear” of Rec. GFCM/41/2017/6

Valerie Lainé (EC): a lot of data missing such as socioeconomic data. We need actions that has to be taken immediately, otherwise the stock assessments are not complete. Maybe it is required technical assistance throughout the FAO regional projects, we need the clear identification of the problems. We have to identify the data missing (effort, or size...)

Morocco: on vulnerable species we have an ambitious program, but we have problem to evaluate them because the DCRF is asking to provide the number of species. We need to find solutions we cannot collect data in regular and yearly manner. Not all the CPCs are involved in all the species, for example Morocco does not have data on eels, which is a specie not present in Morocco.

Miguel Bernal (GFCM): He underlined that it is the first time in having feasibility indicators. This the SAC and not the COC, so we have to decide on what actions to do. Frequency, sustainability and advice for the priority species.

Valerie Lainé (EC): Declared that the region with most problems is the East, so we have to make an additional effort to collect data.

GFCM subregions (reporting countries)	DATASETS NOT TRANSMITTED (%)	TIMELINESS	COMPLETENESS			CONFORMITY	STABILITY	CONSISTENCY
		(% of datasets transmitted after the deadline)	GSA-Segment	Species	Mandatory fields	(% of data rows with issues)	(% of data rows with issues)	(number of data rows with issues)
			(% of issues)					
Western Mediterranean Sea (Algeria, France, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain)	19	76	16.9	-	4.2	16	37.3	9 305
Central Mediterranean Sea (Italy, Libya, Malta, Portugal, Tunisia)	31	47	12.7	-	13.2	28.9	31.3	6 337
Adriatic Sea (Albania, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, Slovenia)	11	31	17.7	-	3.7	12.9	27.1	6 710
Eastern Mediterranean Sea (Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Portugal, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey)	56	55	12.1	-	1.8	15.5	54.4	3 773

FAO Regional projects

3 surveys

Surveys at sea for assessment of fisheries resources (Adriatic Sea)

- Eastern Adriatic MEDITS trawl survey - GSA 18 (August 2018)
- Underwater Television survey in Jabuka/Pomo Pit area - GSA 17 (October 2018 only trawl; April 2019 trawl + UWTV)

- Winter “MEDITS” trawl survey in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA (March 2019)

Exploratory fishery surveys (Eastern Mediterranean)

- Experimental survey with SSF traps and passive nets in Lebanon (2018/2019)

RPOA-SSF

The SAC is invited to:

- Review / Endorse the RPOA-SSF monitoring framework and priority actions (GFCM:SAC21/2019/5) including identified short/mid-term priority actions
- Text the matrix for the characterization of fishing activities as a tool for assessing the scale of fisheries and support further testing at national and subregional levels
- Endorse the technical elements for the management of SSF, particularly the need to incorporate SSF within fleet registries. Discuss any priority measures to be suggested to the Commission and identify necessary additional work.

Valerie Lainé (EC): this is a very complex exercise. She underlined her disappointment by the lack of enthusiasm of this WG on SSF. We need to reform the WG and help it in efficiency, it is premature to ask to the SAC the endorsement of the matrix, we need to work on the matrixes and to text on them. Valerie thanked the platform for the implementation of the SSF and the good work done. But she underlined that at this stage we cannot endorse them, but to revise them, to text the matrixes and review the measures.

Marco Costantini (WWF): as a representative of the platform SSF, we contributed by drafting and creating this platform that is a tool that has been implemented. As Friend of SSF the implementation of RPOA should continue, the matrix should not be an obstacle for the implementation of the RPOA, but a tool to work in parallel. Then he summarised quickly the meeting had in FAO of the Friends of SSF where have been underlined the following priority actions: to move on ensure that a vessel register will include also SSF fleet, the matrix should not be an obstacle of the implementation of the RPOA, SSF within MPAs must be managed, how to include the best scientific monitoring an participatory system, to increase selectivity, reduce incidental catches, mitigate the economic loss, gear identification.

CONCLUSIONS

Recognizing the complexity of the “RPOA-SSF Monitoring Framework and Priority Actions” document, the Committee agreed that more time was needed to properly assess the documents and to respond to the various requests. **To this end, the Committee agreed to continue discussions, under the coordination of the WGSSF chairperson and the GFCM Secretariat and in close collaboration with the Friends of SSF, with a view to convening a one-day meeting on the eve of the forty-third session of the Commission.**

Formulation of advice

Stock assessments: multiannual planning

- Since the adoption of SAC strategy for provision of stocks, and the GFCM mid-term strategy list of priority species, the number of stocks assessed has steadily increased
- In addition, in 2018/2019, the process of “**benchmarking**” was launched, therefore the functioning of the WGSAs currently encompasses:
 - Data preparation sessions in preparation of benchmarks
 - Benchmark sessions for priority species

- Plenary sessions, treating:
 - o Unconsolidated assessments of priority species;
 - o Updated assessments of priority species;
 - o Assessments of non-priority species.

Strengthening of advice

- SAC should decide if WGSAs should provide suggested catch/effort limits both in the cases of quantitative assessment (e.g. through short term simulation) and precautionary advice (e.g. based on fixed/variable reductions linked to fishery related indicators)

- The framework for the provision of advice should be revised to account for the need of both more precise advice in data rich situations and precautionary advice when in dearth of data

The SAC is invited to:

- Comment on the submission of input data for stock assessment, providing advice on the way forward
- Comment / endorse the proposal for the future functioning of the WGSAs, including the need for multiannual planning
- Launch the revision of the framework for the provision of advice and discuss the possibility of determining catch and effort limits (even precautionary) based on assessments

Valerie Lainé (EC): is asking how to transpose the MSY into reality, to simulate the reduction of mortality. We need management scenarios simulations and check the percentage of mortality.

Croatia: the first condition is the input data for an advice, raised also in the Adriatic Sub Committee regional, all the data should come only from official data delivered by each country.

Italy: if the main objective is to give an advice on priority species to support MAP the analysis should be based on official data given by these countries. I agree in general with the proposal for the assessment with benchmark, I think that for non-priority species, GFCM could also adopt assessment approach not based on analytical approach, so advice given based on scientific surveys only.

Chato Osio (EC): scientists start working on the assessment with official data, but they should be able to be free to use other sources of info for a better scientific advice. The assessment of the scientific advice has to be fully documented. On precautionary advice, this could be in line with the CFP where the precautionary approach is an important element.

CONCLUSIONS

In order to maintain the quality of advice:

- i) all data should be made available at least one month in advance of relevant meetings,
- ii) assessments should be based on official data provided by countries on fishing activities (i.e. catch and effort data – number of vessels, number of days at sea, etc.),
- iii) the independence of experts to decide on scientific data and assumptions used (e.g. biological data on life history traits) should be maintained and preserved,
- iv) the use of the different data sources and analyses undertaken should be fully reported. In cases where official data were not available, expert groups should provide advice based on estimations or any other information available and the SAC should evaluate the possibility of proposing precautionary measures on the basis of that advice.

Moreover, the Committee agreed with the need to launch a process to revise and update the framework for the provision of advice endorsed in 2014 in order to include indications on specific advice for stocks having:

- i) quantitative assessments and management strategy evaluation, in which case alternative management measures should be evaluated,
- ii) quantitative assessments, in which case short-term forecasts should be used,
- iii) no quantitative assessment, in which case precautionary advice should be provided.

25 JUNE

Status of Mediterranean stocks

74 stocks discussed; advice provided for 55 of them

- 7 sustainably exploited
- 1 ecologically unbalanced with low fishing mortality
- 1 with low biomass
- 3 uncertain
- 1 possibly overexploited
- 42 other stocks were outside safe biological limits

The status of European eel remains critical Increased coverage:

with 16 new stocks assessed and

five benchmarks

Overall, 11% of the stocks assessed were considered to be within biologically safe limits while 80% of the stocks were considered to be outside biologically safe limits

57 stocks discussed; advice provided for 43 of them

- 5 sustainably exploited
 - red mullet GSA10, GSA16 and GSA20
 - common pandora GSA25
 - common cuttlefish GSA17
- 1 possibly overexploited
- 37 stocks were outside safe biological limits

3 benchmark assessments were performed:

- European hake in GSAs 17-18
- red mullet in GSAs 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19
- blackspot seabream in the Strait of Gibraltar (ongoing)

Of accepted assessments:

- 23 Western Mediterranean
- 7 Central Mediterranean
- 8 Adriatic Sea
- 5 Eastern Mediterranean

European hake continues to be:

- the species assessed in the largest percentage of the GSAs: 60 % of the GSAs in which the species is a priority
- the most exploited species with overexploitation ratios ($F_{\text{current}}/F_{\text{unique}}$) spanning between 3.3 and 15.1

Current measures (minimum landing size, mesh size, etc.) are not providing tangible effects, so immediate management actions to reduce the fishing mortality of European hake stocks were recommended:

- reduction of fishing mortality
- improvement of fishing exploitation patterns
- protection of the most vulnerable life stages of the populations (i.e. juveniles and spawners in appropriate periods and areas)

Status of mullets

The benchmark session for red mullet in GSAs 12-16 and 19 was the first conducted within the GFCM and highlighted the importance of data preparation

Red mullet and striped red mullet were the species with the highest proportion of sustainably exploited stocks

Assessments highlighted the need to:

- **Shift to statistical models** if not already employed
- Use VMS data to **improve knowledge on fleet connectivity** between some GSAs (e.g. 15 and 16)
- Carefully consider joining GSAs
- Use MEDITS for tuning considering issues related to age0

Status of small pelagic stocks

17 stocks discussed; advice provided for 12 of them

- 2 sustainably exploited
 - European anchovy GSA06
 - European anchovy GSA22
- 1 ecologically unbalanced with low fishing mortality
- 1 with low biomass
- 3 uncertain

- 5 in overexploitation

2 benchmark assessments were performed:

- European anchovy in GSAs 17-18
- Sardine in GSAs 17-18

Of accepted assessments:

- 7 Western Mediterranean
- 1 Central Mediterranean
- 2 Adriatic Sea
- 2 Eastern Mediterranean

Status of small pelagic stocks

- The **benchmark of anchovy and sardine in the Adriatic Sea is still ongoing**: advice for 2018 was provided on the basis of updated stock assessments for both species, based, for the first time on **year-1 data**
- To advance towards a quantitative assessment of selected species at the next WG, the WGSASP proposed work plans be implemented for:
 - sardine in the Alboran Sea (GSAs 1, 3, 4)
 - round sardinella in the EM (GSAs 24*, 26, 27)
- The WGSASP recommended coverage of small pelagic assessments increase especially in the southern and eastern Mediterranean

CONCLUSIONS

The SAC is invited to:

- Comment on the **status and of stocks** in the region
- Comment / endorse the proposal to recommend **urgent management measures to reduce fishing mortality of European hake**
- Review / Endorse the **suggestions from the WGSAs**, including on:
 - ✓ The **implementation of proposed work plans**
 - ✓ The need to increase **coverage of small pelagic assessments**

Morocco: each year we come here, and we have uncertain assessments, we have a huge amount of data and it is unacceptable. The situation of the European hake and shrimps is very delicate, so we have to reduce the fishing effort. But how we are going to reduce it?

Valerie Lainé (EC): we have to rationalize the work. The SAC needs to look how best to use the scientists and knowledge, if we set too many benchmarks without results ...we need the data in time. We need to have efforts have to be made geographically. What we need to do is to put in place management measures and to finalise the evaluation of sardines in the GSA of Morocco, GSA 9 and 10, we can't do everything, we need priorities related to the management plans. We need to reduce fish mortality.

Fabio Fiorentino (scientist): in the future in the WG we have to adopt an approach to give an advice less linked to the strictly analytic models. In ICES framework there are different categories of assessment and advice, we have 4 categories, but there are other assessments' approach that are less strong but are used to give advice. So I propose, in order to avoid the precautionary assessment, to revise the approach in the assessment considering also other categories.

Valerie Lainé (EC): the SAC has developed in the right direction, the question of the methodology is important, we will have to stop and think about the methods to adopt. Maybe now is time to reform WG on scientific advice and work on the best approach, which is analytical approach, I agree with Fabio Fiorentino. Methodology is the problem and we can organize a WG of one day with scientific experts to decide on how to proceed and review the methodology.

Alessandro Ligas (scientist): my personal opinion on the European hake management measures is that we should focus now on the spawners and not on only the juveniles. So, I suggest protecting adult status with longline, I do not say nothing of new, we should focus on it. Case of red mullet stocks overall in the med is improving the status in sense of abundance.

Fabio Fiorentino (scientist): add something to the comment of Ligas, it is important the adult status of the European hake, but we correctly start with nursery, so the priority was and is still the reduction of fishing mortality of juveniles. The hake has a high longevity and high fecundity. About the red mullet, the strong reduction of illegal trawling in the coastal areas managed to preserve the nursery areas of the red mullets.

Red coral

• The population of red coral in the Mediterranean could be in a situation of overexploitation with some signs of deterioration; measures in place should be made effective and the need for further measures explored:

- **Traceability mechanisms** to track red coral colonies from landing to end product and a **document certifying its origin** should be developed and implemented
- Data reported by CPCs should improve also with **observers on board** to record actual data of landings and record better information on length frequency distribution (diameter of colonies)
- No country is using ROVs for research in their national waters; Tunisia and Morocco expressed the will to start scientific monitoring on red coral banks in the near future.

The SAC is invited to:

1. Propose further fishery management measures to contrast deterioration of exploited red coral banks, including traceability mechanism and observers onboard
2. Endorse the updated concept note on a research program on red coral
3. Discuss on programme partnership and propose focal points for each country

Valerie: the situation is very critical so we need to put in place measures asap we must not to increase the catch of red coral. Problem of a lot of IUU activities. We can enter into a pilot study with the certification system.

Morocco: specie that must be protected at the highest level.

Interactions between fisheries and marine ecosystems and environment

Work towards a network of essential fish habitats (EFH)

- Advance on the establishment of a network of EFH in the Mediterranean Sea was suggested, focusing on the protection of nurseries and spawning grounds of GFCM priority species with the highest overexploitation rate and low levels of biomass such as *Merluccius merluccius* and *Mullus* sp.
- The **implementation of spatial management measures** should ensure a geographical balance across different ecoregions, subregions, countries and GSAs.

All assessed European hake stocks are heavily overexploited (partic. GSAs 1-7)

Most red mullet stocks are overexploited

In addition...

one of the aims of Rec. GFCM/42/2018/5 on a multiannual management plan for bottom trawl fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily is to protect nursery areas and EFH important for European hake and deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily.

The SAC is invited to:

- Endorse the proposal to advance on the establishment of a **network of EFH** by **focusing on GFCM priority** species with the highest overexploitation rate and low levels of biomass such as European hake and red mullet
- Discuss and propose **specific activities conducive to the protection of nursery and spawning areas in the Mediterranean**

Management of DSF (Deep Sea Fishery) and protection of VMEs (Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems)

The SAC is invited to:

- Review and endorse the **advice provided on the management of DSF and the protection of VMEs**, including
 - the need to implement the adopted technical elements to ensure an efficient **mapping of fishing footprint**,
 - the development of a **GFCM georeferenced database**,
 - the **adoption of protection measures to prevent SAI (Significant Adverse Impacts)**
 - Agree on the need to incorporate monitoring plans in Spatial management measures (such as FRAs, MPAs), and provide comments on the proposed **elements to develop the plans**

CONCLUSIONS

Whenever possible, **FRAs** should be included within a comprehensive management plan. It agreed with the need to monitor the effectiveness of the FRA with respect to its objectives and that **monitoring plans** should accompany any new proposal. Nevertheless, the existence of a monitoring plan should not be a prerequisite and the lack of resources for its implementation should not comprise an obstacle to the adoption of a FRA

Impact of anthropogenic underwater noise on fish resources, climate change and non-indigenous species

- Coordination should be fostered with relevant international organizations (CMS, CBD, IMO) to ensure coherence in the implementation of existing policies addressing the impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine biodiversity.
- Impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise should be adequately addressed and monitored, especially those affecting fisheries.

The SAC is invited to:

- Review and endorse the advice provided on the impact of **anthropogenic underwater noise** on fish resources
- Support the **implementation of subregional pilot studies** on the adaptation strategies to **climate change**
- Consider the need to adopt **regional/subregional fisheries management** measures for blue crab

Valerie Lainé (EU): Pollution causes the real impact on the sexual maturity and allowed us to broaden the vision. On Climate change we have to talk of the climate crisis, I will leave the scientists the correct terminology. Referring to the blue crabs we have to continue to study this specie that is present in the Italian coast too; another specie is the sea cucumber. We have to do something about the puffer fish.

SUBREGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Blackspot seabream in the Strait of Gibraltar

The SAC is invited to:

- Comment on the **status of blackspot seabream** in the Strait of Gibraltar
- Endorse the **update on the technical elements** for the management of blackspot seabream in the

Strait of Gibraltar

- Propose further common management measures (**MCRS, maximum effort**) to be applied by both

Morocco and Spain, in line with the provisions of Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/2

CONCLUSIONS: A multiannual management plan has to be adopted and implemented progressively, while assessing the socio-economic impact of measures adopted.

Proposal of FRA Maledetti shoal

The Italian delegation raised up the fact that neither the Ligurian Region has been informed about this proposal launched by the University of Region, that this area is under Italian territorial waters and is very close to a MPA. They expressed a lot of concern about the institution of the FRA.

Moreover, MEDAC informed that it expressed on the opinion its concern because the proponents didn't consult the stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS: the Committee decided not to submit the proposal to the Commission.

Strait of Sicily Demersal fisheries

The SAC is invited to:

- Comment on the **status of demersal stocks** in the Strait of Sicily

- Provide suggestions, including through precautionary approach, on **spatial management measures to protect EFH of hake and shrimps in the Strait of Sicily**

CONCLUSIONS: The Committee endorsed the SRC-CM (Sub Regional Committee- Central Mediterranean) recommendations and agreed on the need to perform an assessment of the effectiveness of current management measures.

Management of Adriatic Sea small pelagic fisheries

Stock status

Final advice on sardine and anchovy was based on updated assessments based on **year n-1 data** (up to 2018), **for the first time** in the GFCM

Further development of MSE framework

In preparation for the 2021 WKMSE, recommendations on **(socio)economic analyses** related to the outcomes of the biological Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE), include:

i. At a minimum, perform a post-hoc assessment of the economic impact based on biological MSE outcomes, and continue developing the existing biological MSE

ii. Use of a methodology allowing to account for the effective fleet units meaningful for management on a country by country basis, reflecting the different economic realities, fishing pressure and priorities of each country

iii. Post-hoc analyses should be complemented by country-specific analyses (including market and social) and an appraisal of data availability associated to selected fleet units

The SAC is invited to:

- Comment on the **status of small pelagic stocks** in the Adriatic Sea
- Endorse the workplan suggested by the WKMSE-AS for the (socio)economic analysis of the effects of **alternative management measures** for European anchovy and sardine in the Adriatic Sea, including the **need to define fleet units** meaningful for management
- Provide guidance on the **criteria to be applied for the establishment of temporal closure periods**

Miguel Bernal (GFCM): we didn't have a lot of info for criteria, having different closure seasons does not help to control the market, he is wondering if it is possible to have a common closure season.

Valerie Lainé (EU): Informed the EC transposed the GFCM recom. into the EC regulation. It is important to analyse management options for a permanent management plan in Adriatic. We are in a period where we need to check what is good and not and obtain the most appropriate solution. We need to develop some criteria for the closure period. It is time to stop the emergency measures and to consolidate a permanent management plan. It is very important that the CPCs work together with AdriaMed, we need to have data on a short and real time, and we need additional data on socioeconomic impact. Moreover, we have to have a clear picture of the fleet segment by each country, it is important the proportionality concerning the link with fleet unit and the fishing mortality.

Croatia: echoed the statement made by the EU, we need to do additional effort to have all the necessary result by 2021, we managed to deliver data so now scientists have good background with year -1, so it is based on the real state. We have to continue with control measures to set the level playing field.

Albania: we collaborated with EFCA Joint control in the Adriatic Sea, we provided data nursery.

CONCLUSIONS: The Committee endorsed the recommendations of the SRC-AS, including: i) the need to advance on the management strategy evaluation framework, ii) the work plan suggested by the WGMSE-AS for the (socio)economic analysis of the effects of alternative management measures, and iii) the need to define common temporal closures.

Management of Adriatic Sea Demersal fisheries

Potential effect of alternative management scenarios

Based on the results of the STECF-19-02 meeting, the following should be granted consideration when managing Adriatic demersal resources:

i. Scenarios foreseeing a linear reduction in fishing mortality provide the best performance in terms of both recovery and reaching the MSY target. Smaller reductions may not be enough, merely postponing MSY and increasing the probability of it not being reached

ii. For **common sole**, the most effective measure explored is the combination of the 6nm closure (GSA17, Italy only) with the effort reduction. The sole sanctuary does not result in an increase of SSB, and had no significant effects on F

iii. Simulations show that with a two-year management lag, predicted cycles in F are smaller as is uncertainty in the projections for catch and SSB → need to carry out assessments based on year -1 data

iv. The analysis of economic dependency of different fleets on the different species is deemed useful to managers and should be expanded

The **monitoring programme for the Jabuka/Pomo Pit** is advancing in line with the proposed activities

The first results coming from the analysis of surveys and commercial catches have shown that **abundance and size of many priority species inside the FRA are higher and larger than outside**, and some signs of **increasing biomass** (e.g. hake) have been observed, both inside the FRA and in GSA 17 in general.

We saw a video done by Croatia where the status of the stocks improved a lot thank to the FRA. Improvement in the recruitment and also increase of the biomass, this is the beginning of the monitoring.

The SAC is invited to:

Review and validate the content of the proposed FRA in the Southern Adriatic (Bari canyon, GSA 18)

The SAC is invited to:

- Comment on the status of demersal stocks in the Adriatic Sea
- Endorse the Technical elements for the management of demersal fisheries in the Adriatic
- Comment on preliminary results of the effect of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA and on its monitoring plan
- Discuss on the proposal for a FRA in the Bari canyon

Bari canyon FRA proposal

Italy: they appreciated the effort done by the proponents to study the socioeconomic part of the proposal with the involvement of fishermen and stakeholders, they got a lot of interviews. Italian delegation reminded that in Split, during the SRC-AS meeting, asked to complete the info for a better view on the socioeconomic impact, with the possible losses in the closure areas of the proposed FRA. Italian delegation reported that the proponents got some results, but in their opinion the results are general, they estimate an average of the losses while for the ideal benefits they didn't give any clear idea or value, there is just some reference of the

example of the FRA in Pomo Pit. So, the Italian delegation asked to better estimate the loss and the future benefits for next year in order to gather more data, because the proposal is not complete, and it is necessary to have the best analysis on environmental and socioeconomic aspects.

The EC (Valerie Lainé) underlined the importance on the creation of FRAs, and the FRA Pomo/Pit it is an excellent example of FRA. Referring to this proposal we need more time to mature the proposal and next year we can have success in this area. The SAC cannot validate this proposal that has to be sent again to the WG.

CONCLUSIONS: The Committee agreed to review this proposal during its next session (2020). In this respect, work should continue during the intersession to better estimate social and economic costs and expected benefits from the potential implementation of this FRA, as well as to analyse effective ways to integrate the proposal into a comprehensive set of management measures.

Deep-water red shrimp in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean

The SAC is invited to:

- Endorse the proposal to **extend precautionary management measures** contained in existing Recommendations **to all central Mediterranean GSAs (i.e. to GSAs 12-16)** using the technical elements endorsed at the 20th SAC as a basis
- Endorse the advice to **freeze fishing effort/capacity and implement minimum landing size and mesh size**
- Endorse the **proposed minimum set of elements for the preparation of proposals for national fleet development plans**
- Endorse **the workplan towards the provision of advice on the status of the stocks, including the ToRs for the Joint EastMed/MedSudMed/GFCM data preparation meeting (September 2019)**

Valerie Lainé (EU): the situation is improved with the coordination of the CPCs involved. We should be pleased with this progress. It is the first time we had a management plan on the Eastern part, so CPCs managed to work together.

CONCLUSIONS: The Committee endorsed all recommendations of the Sub Regional Committee on Eastern and central Med. Mentioned above.

SAC Work plan 2019-2021

The Committee discussed the list of **benchmark assessments** proposed for the 2019-2020 intersession and agreed on the following priorities:

- i) finalization of benchmarks for anchovy and sardine in the Adriatic Sea (before the 2019 WGSASP) and for blackspot seabream in the Strait of Gibraltar (during the 2019 WGSAD),
- ii) benchmark for sardine in the Alborán sea (during the 2019 WGSASP),
- iii) benchmark for European hake in GSAs 01-07, 12-16, 19, 20, 22 and 26 (the week before the 2019 WGSAD) and for round sardinella in the eastern Mediterranean (before the 2020 SRC-EM). The Committee underlined that the timely provision and adequate preparation of data were prerequisites for holding benchmark sessions.