



Recreational Fisheries GFCM

State of play and next steps

MEDAC 20-04-2023

I – Adoption of minimum rules for sustainable recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea during the 45th GFCM Annual Session

Conservation measures

Prohibitions

- a) engage in recreational fishing **without a valid fishing licence or registration**, in accordance with paragraph 10 and from its date of application;
- b) **sell or trade catches** from recreational fishing activities;
- c) **retain any specimen pertaining to the species** listed in Annex 1;
- d) **retain any specimen smaller than the minimum conservation reference sizes** adopted by the GFCM;
- e) **fish in the areas** listed in Annex 3;
- f) **fish** underwater with a **self-contained breathing apparatus**;
- g) fish underwater **from sunset until dawn**; and
- h) use **simultaneously hand-held spears or spear guns and a self-contained underwater breathing apparatus** (aqualung).

Prohibited species
Marine mammals (all species)
Marine birds (all species)
Marine reptiles (all species)
Species listed in Appendices I and II under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
Species listed in Appendices I and II under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
Species listed in Annex II under the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol) of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention),
Marine species protected under CPC legislation
Marine species specifically prohibited for capture by recreational fishing under CPC legislation

Prohibited methods
Toxic, stupefying or corrosive substances
Explosives
Electric current
Methods prohibited under CPC legislation

Prohibited areas
Areas protected by means of and in accordance with GFCM decisions, in particular the sensitive habitats and fisheries restricted areas established to protect essential fish habitats and vulnerable marine ecosystems, in line with the recommendations in force
Areas specifically prohibited to recreational fishing under CPC legislation

Conservation measures

Practices and fishing gear allowed in recreational fisheries

- a) rods, hand lines and trolling lines, utilized without an electromechanical aid or with an electromechanical aid that does not exceed a power limit of 800 W;
 - b) hand-held spears or spear guns;
 - c) fishing underwater to catch fish or collect crustaceans and molluscs;
 - d) fishing by foot to collect crustaceans and molluscs;
 - e) traps and pots, with a maximum of three traps and three pots per permit;
 - f) longlines, with a maximum number of hooks to be established in accordance with paragraph 32;
 - g) cast nets (or throw nets);
 - h) corks and line; and
 - i) using artificial light when fishing for cephalopods with rods, hand lines or hand-held spears.
- + **CPCs**, on the basis of stock assessment and impact assessment, **may limit the number of fishing gear and their accessories** (e.g. number of longlines and hooks for each longline, number of traps and pots, lures) authorized per fisher and may define further specific regulation for passive gear.
- + **CPCs**, on the basis of the most recent scientific advice, **may adopt additional measures** to regulate recreational fisheries, such as **landing limits** and **spatial and temporal closures** (e.g. on mapped spawning areas, spawning periods, spawning and juvenile aggregations).

Control and monitoring measures

Licences

- + By 1 January 2025, **CPCs shall put in place and maintain either a mandatory licensing scheme or a registry scheme covering all recreational fishers**. This provision applies to recreational fishers on foot, only after a proper assessment has been completed by the GFCM

Catch declaration and reporting

- + **CPCs may establish a pilot project on catch declaration for recreational fisheries** when catch declaration is applicable and on a voluntary basis. Where possible, CPCs may opt for ergonomic digital app-based catch declaration tools. Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties shall ensure that recreational fishers participating in this pilot project declare the following elements, at least for the species listed in Annex 1 and Annex 4:
 - a) fishing licence or registration number;
 - b) species and estimated live weight per species and fishing trip; and
 - c) fishing zone.

Control and enforcement

- + For recreational fishing activity conducted from a vessel, **CPCs shall establish and implement a system to control and monitor recreational fishing activities**, complementing existing national control plans. Such a system shall be based on risk analysis, taking into account the frequency of recreational fishing activities and the threats they pose to marine living resources, in particular regarding the prohibitions listed in paragraph 6.

Control and monitoring measures

Control and enforcement

- + **CPCs shall establish and implement an effective sanctioning system** against any infringement to the rules set out in this recommendation. The sanctions and penalties applied shall be effective, proportionate and dissuasive and shall take into account the frequency of recreational fishing activities and the threats they pose to marine living resources, in particular regarding the prohibitions listed in paragraph 6.
- + **CPCs may implement measures on finclipping** for certain species in order to prevent their illegal sale to fishmongers and restaurants.

Scientific information

Data collection

- + CPCs shall **sample and survey the recreational fishing activities** taking place on their territory and may use for harmonized sampling and surveying the relevant *FAO Handbook for data collection on recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea*.

Pilot projects and research programme

- + In 2023, the **Working Group on Recreational Fisheries shall prepare a concept note for a research programme on recreational fishing activities**. The SAC shall review the concept note at its twenty-fourth session in 2023 and provide advice to the GFCM. The forty-sixth session of the GFCM in 2023 shall review the concept note for adoption.
- + The GFCM Secretariat shall **launch the research programme in 2024**.

Data reporting

- + By 31 January 2024 and then each following year, CPCs shall report to the GFCM Secretariat the elements listed below:
 - a) the list of species whose capture is prohibited for recreational fishing under national and/or local legislation;
 - b) the fishing methods prohibited for recreational fishing under national and/or local legislation;
 - c) the areas specifically prohibited for recreational fishing under national and/or local legislation;
 - d) the list of species whose capture is regulated for recreational fishing under national and/or local legislation; and
 - e) any other measures regulating recreational fishing activities under national and/or local legislation.

Participation to governance and promotion of best practices

-Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties shall endeavour to involve federations and associations in the management of recreational fishing activities.

Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties shall actively encourage federations, associations and individual recreational fishers to:

- a) **develop websites to inform their members and the public** about compliance with local/national regulations, ecological issues and the impacts of their activity on resources and coastal and marine environment;
- b) participate in sustainability efforts through **regular training and dissemination of information**; and
- c) behave in an environmentally friendly way, including by:
 - encouraging the recycling of fishing material;
 - discouraging anchoring over sensitive habitats;
 - encouraging the targeting and the destruction of non-indigenous species;
 - promoting alternatives to materials that are potentially hazardous to the environment (lead sinkers, artificial fishing lines, bait containers and lures, barbed hooks, etc.);
 - recovering ghost gear and disposing of it in accordance with national legislation;
 - killing retained fish speedily and responsibly to avoid unnecessary suffering; and
 - promoting best practices for catch and release (“no kill”) fishing.

Catch and release

Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties may actively encourage federations, associations and individual recreational fishers to apply and promote catch and release practices.

Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties may mandate catch and release practices, in particular for relevant species or areas or during certain periods of the year or day

Regionalization

As of 2023, the GFCM shall adopt specific recommendations based on SAC advice in order to implement the principles of the present recommendation in each of the following subregions: a) western Mediterranean; b) central Mediterranean; c) Adriatic Sea; and d) eastern Mediterranean.



The SAC advice referred to in paragraph 24 shall take into account the specificities of the recreational fisheries in each subregion listed in paragraph 32

List of priority species

GFCM subregions		Western Mediterranean	Central Mediterranean	Adriatic Sea	Eastern Mediterranean
Geographical subareas		1 to 11	12 to 16, 19 to 21	17 and 18	22 to 27
Scientific name	FAO 3-alpha code				
<i>Boops boops</i>	BOG	X	X	X	X
<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	DOL		X	X	X
<i>Dentex Dentex</i>	DEC	X	X		
<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	BSS	X	X	X	
<i>Diplodus annularis</i>	ANN		X		
<i>Diplodus sargus</i>	SWA		X		X
<i>Epinephelus marginatus</i>	GPD	X			
<i>Epinephelus spp.</i>	GPX		X		X
<i>Lagocephalus sceleratus</i>	LFZ	X	X	X	X
<i>Loligo spp.</i>	SQC			X	

II – Next steps

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE AND QUESTIONNAIRE


Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES (SAC)
Twenty-fourth session
Online, 20–23 June 2023
Draft <u>concept</u> note for a research programme on recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

GFCM QUESTIONNAIRE ON NATIONAL RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

This questionnaire is carried out in line with the work plan of the GFCM's 45th annual session where it was requested to produce a summary of the current state of recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region. The results of this questionnaire will be included in the concept note for a GFCM Research Programme on Recreational Fisheries (RF) and will serve to inform the preparation of future work on recreational fisheries.

NB: in this context "recreational fisheries" refers to marine recreational fisheries carried out in the GFCM area of application

1. Country name: _____

2. Is there an estimation of the number of marine recreational fishers at national level?
 Yes No
 - a. If YES, how many? _____
 - b. Reference: _____

3. Does your country have a license system in place? Yes No
 - a. If YES, does the license system cover the following fishing modalities?
 - Shore fishing Yes No
 - Boat fishing Yes No
 - Underwater fishing Yes No
 - b. Are the contact details (e.g. mobile phone, email, etc.) available for each licensed fisher?
 Yes No
 If YES, are these contact details available for communicating with fishers? Yes No
 Is there a fee to be paid for the RF license? Yes No

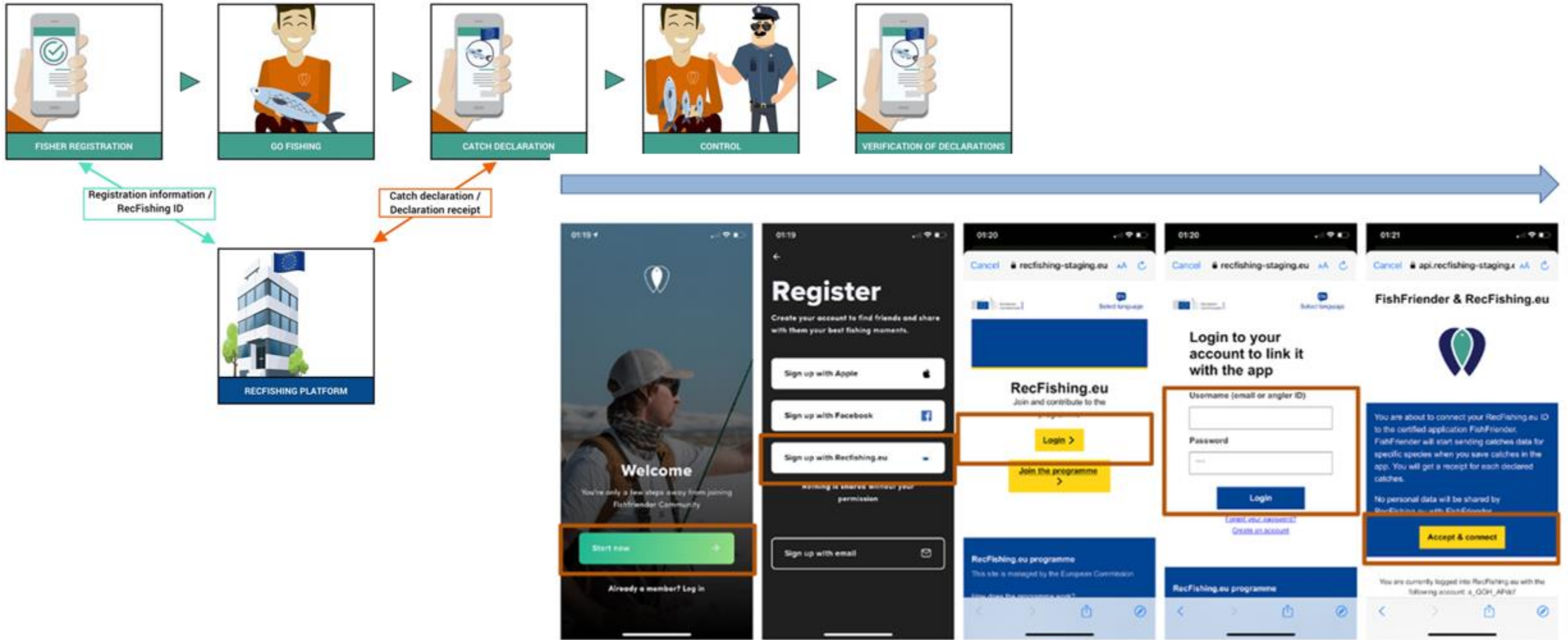
Conclusion of the last SRC-CM

The SRC-CM suggested strengthening the draft concept note for a research programme by making more explicit linkage between this and the objectives of Recommendation GFCM/45/22/12. The SRC-CM stressed the importance of not waiting until the conclusion of this research programme to start implementing minimum standards for recreational fisheries at the subregional level (e.g. to put in place conservation measures, for example the list of protected species, etc.). Step 1: implement minimum stand measures at sub-regional level next year; Step 2: adapt measures once results of research programme will be available. It is important to not postponing decisions until 2027. **The SRC-CM took note of the questionnaire circulated to CPCs to collect information on the current state of recreational fisheries and data collection and urged that the questionnaire results be summarized by subregion and made available to the SAC, in view of facilitating SAC advice on minimum subregional standards.**

Mapping of measures to be further defined at sub-regional level as of 2024

	Conservation measures	Technical measures	Control and monitoring measures	Prohibited species	Prohibited methods	Prohibited areas	List of priority species
In all different sub-regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landing limits - Spatio-temporal closure (e.g. mapped spawning areas, spawning periods, spawning and juvenile aggregations) - Catch and release practices for relevant species or areas or during certain periods of the year or day - Any other relevant measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of hooks per longline - Number of traps and pots - Number of lures - Further specific regulation for passive gear - Any other relevant measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limit the number of licences - Pilot project for catch declaration - List of species for which implementing fin clipping - Any other relevant measure 				

RecFishing.eu (i)



Rec.fishing.eu (ii)

Recreational Fisheries (RecFishing)

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Dashboard

Configure my dashboard

From start of
 January 2020
 To end of
 April 2023

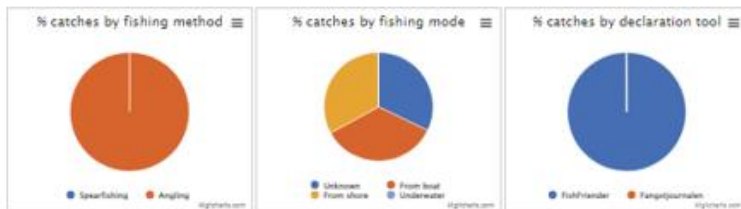
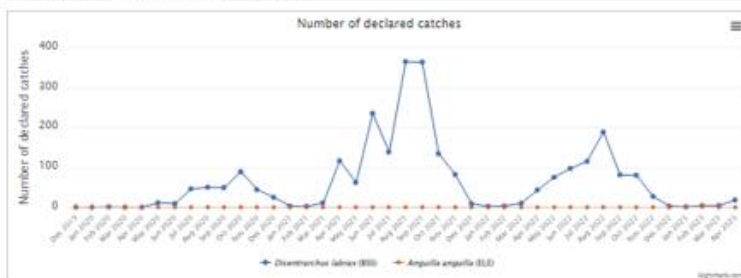
Which species?
 All species
 Only these species
 Select a fish species
 Anguilla anguilla (ELE)
 Dicentrarchus labrax (BSS)
 Dapodus vulgaris (OTR)
 Mullus barbatus (MUT)
 Octopus vulgaris (OCC)
 Thunnus thynnus (BFT)

Which areas?
 All areas
 Only these areas

Activity overview



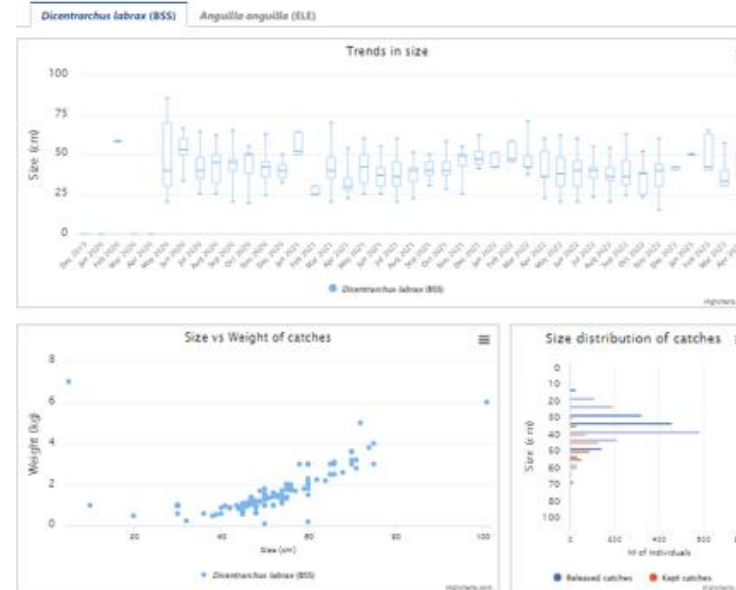
Active fishers Declared catches Kept catches



Map



Catch sizes and weights



Rec.fishing.eu (iii)

Latest improvements to the platform:

- From 4 to + 70 spp
- Addition of all EU official languages
- Implement more useful ways to visualize the data collected

Next phase (in preparation):

- Maintenance
- Improvements
- Onboarding of more apps
- Active promotion and dissemination
- + (...)

Thank you



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