



Coordination to Support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean. CopeMed Phase II (GCP/INT/028/SPA; GCP/INT/006/EC) and ArtFiMed



Summary of the FAO Mediterranean Projects activities



Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Hellenic Ministry of Rural Development and Food



ITALIAN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY POLICIES



Regione Siciliana

This document summarizes the most significant achievements of the FAO executed fisheries Regional Projects currently funded by the European Commission, namely AdriaMed, CopeMed II and EastMed, with main focus on 2011. These projects have been complemented by other initiatives such as the MedSudMed project, financed by the Government of Italy, MedFisis financed by the European Commission (ended in 2011), the ArtFiMed project funded by the Government of Spain (ended in 2011) and the GEFfunded Med LME project. These other projects are not included in this summary

Through the above projects FAO has been able to provide support to developing the capacity of fisheries research and management institutions in the Mediterranean area since 1996, thanks to the financial support provided by the Governments of Italy, Spain and Greece and by the European Commission.

The AdriaMed Project GCP/RER/010/ITA “Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea” was financed by the Government of Italy through the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF) during its first phase (September 1999 – September 2005). The project was extended into its second phase (AdriaMed II) for the period 2005-2012, with MiPAAF providing core funding and co-funding from the European Commission (April 2007 to March 2008). A twelve months extension was granted by DG-Mare starting from January 2010 followed by a second twelve month extension which started in April 2011. The countries participating in the AdriaMed project are Albania, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia and Montenegro.

The CopeMed Project “Coordination to Support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean” (1996 -2005) was financed by the Government of Spain through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Agency for Cooperation (AECI). A second phase of the project, named Copemed II, started in February 2008 with core funding from the Spanish Ministry of Environment, Rural and Marine Affairs and co-funding from the European Commission since 2008. Both funding sources have been extended to December 2012. Countries involved in CopeMed II are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Malta, Italy, France and Spain.

The EastMed Project GCP/INT/041/EC-GRE-ITA “Scientific and Institutional Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean” started its activities in September 2009 and will run for five years. It is financed by the Governments of Greece, Italy and by the European Commission. The first months of the project were dedicated mostly to setting in place the organization of the project and all the necessary administrative procedures and recruitment of staff. The Inception Meeting was held in Athens, Greece (April 2010). The countries/entities participating in the EastMed project are Cyprus, Egypt, Gaza Strip and West Bank, Greece, Italy, Lebanon and Turkey.

2. Current state and past achievements

The AdriaMed, CopeMed II and EastMed projects have produced a number of notable achievements in fisheries research and management in the Mediterranean. The first, and probably the most important, is the establishment of a framework for regional cooperation in fishery research and management involving all the countries covered by the projects. The Projects encouraged a “regional attitude” to address common problems related to sustainable fisheries. Several permanent regional working groups were created, providing a trustworthy environment, where researchers and managers from the region could identify priorities and develop common comprehensive and multidisciplinary applied research activities (including data sharing and analysis). This work produced information in support to the fisheries management process at national, sub-regional and regional levels, the latter through the GFCM.

The active participation of key project stakeholders (e.g. participating countries and GFCM), in the annual Coordination Committee meetings ensures that national, sub-regional and regional priorities guide the formulation of project workplans.

The Projects contributed to the enhancement of capacity through regional and sub-regional activities, and through on-the job training provided directly by project staff to national fisheries research and management institutions.

Building basic knowledge on fisheries, their resources and the supporting ecosystems has been another major outcome of the Mediterranean projects, by activating and supporting several lines of applied research (e.g. identification of nursery and spawning areas, stock evaluations, description of the main water mass circulation and bio-economic indicators), thereby also contributing to countries complying with GFCM obligations to provide fishery statistics, including socio-economic data, and information on the state of the resources (stock assessments).

Environmental and fishery independent data were collected through cooperative scientific surveys, sometimes using innovative methodologies. The projects also developed several data management tools, including a data survey management tool that has been developed by the Projects with the contribution of all the participating Institutes.

The challenge of standardising sampling procedures and data analysis has been addressed as a collaborative undertaking, thus laying the basis for joint data processing and analysis. Scientists from national fisheries research institutions of all participating countries discuss and agree on methodologies to be applied to fishery research, effectively creating the conditions for coordinated and joint research in the region. One of the outcomes of this activity has been the presentation of joint assessments to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) of the FAO General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

In addition to playing a key role in fostering cooperation in fisheries research and management, including on shared stocks, the influence of the projects expanded beyond their respective areas, and contributed to strengthening the cooperation among other Mediterranean countries in the framework of the GFCM.

A summary of the projects’ activities for 2011 is provided in the table below.

The Projects in numbers

Common activities	Support to GFCM activities and meetings	Meetings	Participants supported	Countries and institutions
	Participation of scientists to the GFCM meetings including document presentations	9	34	Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey.
	Shared stock assessments and surveys (fisheries and aquaculture)			
	Working groups on demersal and small pelagic fisheries resources organised by the projects	5	119	Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey.
	Shared stocks assessed and presented to the GFCM	7		Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia.
	Collection of biological parameters	3	34	Egypt, Montenegro, Morocco.
	Fisheries dependent catch and effort Surveys	4	24	Egypt, Montenegro, Morocco, Tunisia.
	Joint surveys at sea (acoustic, ichthyoplankton, bottom trawl, beam bottom trawl)	3	13	Albania, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, Slovenia.
	Working groups and training on surveys at sea	4	66	Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Italy, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey.
	Training courses on stock assessments	2	40	Albania, Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey.
	Census of aquaculture facilities			Albania.
	Enhancing national fisheries statistic systems			
	Development of MedStat statistical system (fleet register)			Albania, Egypt, Lebanon.
	Documentation and user manuals diffused			Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, EC, Egypt, France, Greece, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey.
	Development of a tool for data transmission to the GFCM			Montenegro.
	Appraisal of the fisheries departments of Egypt and Lebanon			Egypt, Lebanon.
	Support to the Tunisian SSF statistical system			Tunisia.
	Development of tools for data management (AdriaMed trawl surveys, ATRIS; Adriatic small pelagic catch data, ASPA)			Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Slovenia.
	Customization of the Adriamed Trawl Survey Information Sistem (ATRIS) database as per request by Sultanate of Oman	3		Sultanate of Oman.
	Regional coordination and planning			
Co-ordination committee meetings	3	33	Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, EC, Egypt, France, Greece, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey.	
Official meetings with national fisheries administrations	21		Albania, Algeria, EC, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey.	
Synergies in activities with entities other than FAO			EC funded IPA Project, Fisheries institutes in all countries, Universities, MedSeaLME, GFCM Lamed project, IUCN Med, Spanish organisation on recreational fisheries, RACMED, GEF, MEDIAS, MEDITS, MedPAN, MEDCOAST, MEDISAMAK, INFOSAMAK, UNEP, RACSPA, MSC, CIHEAM, EC	
Co-ordination with FAO regional, sub-regional and national offices			FAO Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Spain, Egypt, Lebanon, West Bank, FAO RNE (Cairo, Egypt), SEUM (Budapest, Hungary), SNE (Tunis, Tunisia) .	
Publications, information systems and communication				
FAO projects technical publications	27		Distributed to Mediterranean countries, national organisations and GFCM	
Med projects website (17,235 average users; 26,000 pages month visited)			Worldwide	
Support to ASFA network (monitoring of scientific publication issued in the Adriatic Sea, including training activities)	1	1	Bulgaria, Croatia, Egypt, Montenegro.	

Fisheries management process				
Subregional activities	Training on ecosystem approach to fisheries	1	4	Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia.
	CIHAEM training course on fisheries management - University of Alicante Review of the licensing system	1	3	Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia. Lebanon
	WS on fisheries management and approaches to managers	1	28	Cyprus, EC, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Palestine, Turkey.
	Establish partnerships with fisheries administrations and scientific institutions			Albania, Croatia, Egypt, Italy, Montenegro.
	Review on fisheries legislative framework			Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Tunisia.
	Co-organisation of two national days on small scale fisheries in Morocco and Tunisia	2	50	AECID (Spain), JICA (Japan), Morocco, Tunisia.
	Preparation of an experiment on trawl mesh size			Algeria, Morocco.

5. Project approach and organization

The Mediterranean Projects are managed through a fully participative approach, whereby the countries, through their active participation in the Coordination Committees and in the different project Working Groups (WGs) effectively steer the project development and focus.

Maximizing possible synergies across the subregional projects is achieved through participation of the projects coordinators in the Coordination Committees of all projects.

Coordination and collaboration with GFCM takes place at various levels, including participation of projects staff in relevant GFCM meetings (e.g. the SAC and its subcommittees), or participation of the GFCM secretariat in the Coordination Committees.

FAO ensures technical backstopping from HQs in specific areas as required, and contributes to overall coordination of all FAO project initiatives in and outside the region.

6. Proposed activities for the future

Building on past achievements, the projects will focus on four major aspects:

- i) further support the development of national capacity for fisheries-related research activities in a broad sense, enhancing multidisciplinary research work;
- ii) support the countries in widening and adapting the scope of their research programmes to respond more directly to the knowledge needs of the implementation of the EAF;
- iii) support fisheries managers to take EAF considerations into account in their planning and implementation of fisheries management regimes.
- iv) ensure continuity to and support the reinforcement of the international cooperative framework already established between scientific institutions, including reinforced communication and information exchange; and
- v) reinforce capacity development initiatives, thereby providing managers, policy makers and other stakeholders with a vehicle for furthering the overall objective of refining and operationalizing EAF.

support the development of coordinated and participative fisheries management plans consistent with EAF principles at national and regional levels.

In addition, in order to strengthen the coordination, regular meetings with donors are arranged.