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MED RAC REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON RECREATIONAL FISHING

BARCELONA , MARCH 23, 2011.

The members of the working group of RAC MED on recreational fishing participated in the meeting that took place at the headquarters of R.N.C. in Barcelona, on March 23, 2011.

The meeting is opened by the RAC MED Executive secretary, Rosa Caggiano, who thanks the participants for their presence and informs them on the objective of the working group, its envisaged mode of operation and on the double role of the coordinator: to coordinate the group on the one hand, and to inform the Executive Commission on the outcome, on the other.

The participants are asked to submit a proposal for a coordinator of the working group. The nomination of the representative of the Spanish Confederation of Responsible Recreational Fisheries is proposed and accepted. Mr Esteban Graupera thanks the participants for his nomination and informs on the documents (in annex) that have been distributed by the secretariat of RAC MED before the meeting:

1. Document Big Game Italia approved by the Executive Committee (ExCom) of RAC MED in Rimini to be used as the basis of the discussions.
2. Document on Recreational Fishing from PEPMA
3. Study on the socio-economic impact of recreational fishing in the Spanish Mediterranean. Tragsa, MARM Espana
4. 4 GFCM: SAC13/2011/Inf.18

REPORT OF THE TRANSVERSAL WORKSHOP ON THE MONITORING OF RECREATIONAL FISHERIES IN THE GFCM AREA, **Palma de Mallorca**, Spain, 20-22 October 2010;

5. Presentation of the Royal Decree on the Maritime Recreational Fishing at the external waters of Spain (in English, as Power Point in pdf)

The following documents have been also distributed during the meeting:

6. **PAGE 6** of the document : GFCM:SAC13/2011/Inf.7 2010, DRAFT REPORT OF THE 11th SESSION OF THE SAC SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (SCESS)

Saint George's Bay Malta , November 29- December 2, 2010 (draft)



* Available only in English **ONLY RECREATIONAL FISHING TEXT;**

7. EAA reflections on and input to Big Game Italia paper – 21 march 2011

8. Position of CEP RR in view of the next annual assembly of CGPM 9-14 May.

THE COURSE OF THE MEETING

1. The coordinator takes the floor and presents the double objective of the meeting:

- A. To formulate a RAC MED position to be forwarded to the Commission and taken into account during the 35th Session of the Assembly of the General Fishing Commission of the Mediterranean (CGPM) where the recommendations proposed by SCESS (Sub- committee on Economic and Social Sciences) of the SAC(Scientific Advisory Committee), will be examined.
- B. To lay the foundations of the RAC MED working group, having as a starting point the document presented by the organization BIG GAME ITALIA and approved by the Executive Committee of RAC MED.

2. The representative of FEDAS presents request to the members to take into account the activities of underwater fishing, as well.

3. The representative of KGZS intervene with a short presentation of the legislation in Slovenia.

4. The representative of PEPMA considers that the various fishing gears, cages, nets, long lines should be included at the data base, under the scope that they should be banned from use in recreational fisheries. She also notices that it would be useful for all members of RAC WGs to be informed on the legislation in the other Mediterranean countries (at least the EU member state countries), before the meetings.

5. The coordinator underlines that before examining in detail the activities of the working group, it is necessary to reach a definite position in view of the 35th meeting of the CGPM Assembly.

6. The secretary of RACMED adds that it is important to approve during the meeting a document with the position of the working group. She also mentions the need to adopt a language for the working documents and she proposes the English language,

7. The representative of PEPMA stated that all documentation should be also translated into Greek, in order for all members of her organization to be able to follow up with the discussions.

8.As to the position of CEP RR, the representative of BIG GAME ITALIA underlines that in practice this is identified with their own. He proposes to accept the definitions of document 6 and he then makes a presentation on illegal fishing saying that it is important to attribute great importance to transparency and traceability.

9. The representative of the Ministry on the Environment, Rural Areas and Marine Environment, makes a presentation of the new Royal Decree on Marine Recreational Fishing at the external waters.

10. The representative of EAA makes a brief presentation on recreational fishing and its importance both from the point of view of the number of people involved and its financial dimensions and he underlines the



need to make it clear that the catches cannot be traded. He makes a general comment that there is no compliance with the laws and that the idea of imposing sanctions should be supported. He also says that there where commercial fishing takes place, the possibility should be given for recreational fishing as well.

11. The representative of ANAPI PESCA says that the professional sector is obliged to be subject to limitations and that recreational fishing should also accept the due limitations. He remarks that in any case there are no conflicts.

12. Ms Ana Gordoá underlines that the concept of license is ambiguous and that in her opinion it should be considered as a tool of management and not as a tax or duty. She also proposes that the licenses should be of limited duration 2/3 years.

13. The representative of FEDAS asks for a mention to be made in the document that the licenses should be mandatory for the States.

14. The representative of Big Game Italia makes a presentation on the operation of the census/licenses system that was recently initiated in Italy.

15. The representative of EAA informs that in France too, the idea of recreational fishing licenses through internet is promoted. His organization is in favor only if it is free of charge. In France, recreational fishing represents less than 2% of the total of the catches.

16. The representative of PEPMA mentions that Greece has a licensing system since 1985, exclusively for recreational fishing with fishing boats. She asked whether the recreational fishing licenses that have been issued by a Member State should be valid for other Member States, stating that this should not be the case.

17. The representative of LEGA PESCA comments that it should be made clear that PESCA TURISMO is not part of recreational fishing. This has also been supported by the representatives of FEDAS and EMPA as well.

18. The representative of FEDAS believes that in the text itself of the SAC working group the differences between the two concepts are clear.

19. The representative of EMPA declares that this is not the most adequate place to discuss this issue.

20. At the end of the first part of the meeting, the members of the RAC MED working group express their **UNANIMOUS** support as to the following points:

- Adopt and include to the GFCM Glossary the following amended definitions:
 - *Recreational fishing: Fishing activities exploiting marine living aquatic resources for leisure or sport purposes from which it is prohibited to sell or trade the catches obtained.*
 - *Underwater fishing: Recreational fishing activity practiced as a sport or for leisure by snorkeling techniques without the help of mechanical devices (e.g.*



scooter);

- Provide a definition of “Pesca turismo” to be included in the GFCM Glossary; (It was agreed that “Pesca turismo” should not be part of recreational fishing and required a definition to be drafted);
- The SCESS underlined the importance to develop a common and harmonized scientific monitoring framework protocol for recreational fisheries. The SCESS recommended that a regional study be carried out to overview the recreational fishing activities with the following data, in order to estimate basic indicators of recreational fisheries for each segment (leisure and sport) and also for each modality (shore based, boat based, underwater fishing):

- 1 Number of licenses issued
- 2 Targeted species list
- 3 Catch amounts by targeted species (kg)
- 4 Recreational fishing expenditures per fisher

(hotel, restaurant, transport, fishing gears [e.g. baits and accessories], etc.)

- 5 Age and gender of the recreational fisher
- 6 Fishing days per year and average hours per fishing day

- The SCESS recommended that an **obligatory** licensing system should be **adopted** for the recreational fisheries in the GFCM area (**not to be seen as a tax or levy, but used only for monitoring and enforcement of the sector**)
- The SCESS recommended the elaboration of a Code of Practice/technical guidelines on recreational fisheries, in support of the responsible development, promotion and management of recreational fisheries in the GFCM area;

21. This signals the end of the first part of the meeting.

22. PERMANENT WORKING GROUP

23. The coordinator asks Ms Gordoia to present her point of view as to the opinion to be adopted by the working group. Ms Gordoia proposes various alternatives such as the uniform regulation for all the countries.



24. The representative of FEDAS mentions the need to define a common framework protocol for monitoring and that work should start towards this direction.
25. The representative of PEPMA expresses herself in favour of a common regulation.
26. The coordinator informs that Camille Samier (FAO/FIPI) presented a table with the regulations of the Mediterranean countries and it might be used as a basis.
27. The coordinator recommends before entering into details to examine:
1. Whether they will examine the issue of recreational fishing as an isolated activity at sea.
 2. Whether they will work taking as a basis that recreational fishing coexists with the small coastal fishing and that we should never forget the fact of their daily coexistence. Recreational fishing with boats shares the same ports, fishing zones and some types of objectives. Furthermore, these two activities are present at the traditionally fishing areas that are receiving many tourists.
28. The coordinator underlines that we should take into account the deep lack of knowledge that each sector has for the problems another sector is facing.
29. The coordinator mentions that the known data for recreational fishing with boat at the Spanish Mediterranean are: almost 70.000 boats, a socio-economic impact of almost 650 million euros and catches amounting to 8.500 tons, that is the 2% of the total catches. For this reason we should bear in mind that the positions and the recommendations that we elaborate concern more than 300.000 boats. Since there is no other solution, everybody agrees that under the circumstances, coexistence is a must.
30. The representative of Big Game Italia says that the objectives of the preservation of the fishing resources should be common and that the only way to prevent illegal fishing is through cooperation.
31. The representative of ANAPI PESCA states that the fishermen would like to be the ones to control their profession. Nevertheless there are reasons why we should aim at reaching a common position.
32. The representative of LEGA PESCA believes that there exist various types of recreational fishing and that these categories should be studied together with gears and types of equipment in order to differentiate the passive from the active gears.
33. Ms Ana Gordoia believes that the passive equipment should not be considered as recreational fishing. However she expressed the view that exceptions may be considered as some that are used in northern Europe. The representatives of FEDAS and PEPMA agreed.
34. The representative of KGZS informed that in Slovenia the passive fishing gears have been banned.
35. The representative of Big Game Italia says that we cannot generalize on an issue without knowing the number of fishermen using them and that in any case this issue will be examined at a later stage.
36. The coordinator proposes before coming to another item, as the issue of passive fishing gears, to put together all the studies conducted during the last ten years on recreational fishing in the Mediterranean. He also suggests to collect all the existing legislation of the Mediterranean member countries.



37. The coordinator also mentions that a decision taken to review the regulations will entail the need to examine the issue of information, awareness campaign and adequate training of the recreational fishermen.

38. Finally, the representative of FEDAS proposes to ask the national administrations that are competent for fishing matters in the Member States to take seriously into account the issue of recreational fishing.

39. The representative of KGZS believes that her country is already doing it.

40. The representative of WWF declares that the various national administrations should be more involved in a proper management of Recreational Fisheries. WWF believes that in the future passive gears should not be considered among those used by recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean. In addition, the “catch and release” concept should be promoted and the issues of IUU fishing, illegal sales and black market should be seriously tackled.

41. At the end of the meeting the coordinator informs that the conclusions of the group will be sent to the members of ExCom, expresses his disappointment on behalf of the members of this numerous group, for the absence of a representative of the EC that might have been able to convey the spirit of coexistence among the various fields represented and particularly the need to take into account this coexistence when the issue of the management of both sectors is under discussion.

42. The Executive secretary of RACMED declares the end of the meeting, thanking the Spanish representatives for the organization and FNCCP and CEPRR for their hospitality. She also reminds that the participants should have to conduct them via internet.

