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Roma, 06 novembre 2012

REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

The General Assembly met on 29th February 2012 at 9.45 in the meeting room of the Italian Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport to consider and discuss the following Agenda:

ordine del giorno

1. Presentazione del Presidente della CGPM, Stefano Cataudella, e del Segretario Esecutivo Abdellah Srour, sul processo di modernizzazione della CGPM, con l'ausilio di una task force e un primo programma quadro a supporto del raggiungimento degli obiettivi di questa iniziativa
2. Approvazione del verbale dell'Assemblea Generale del 21 febbraio 2011, Rimini
3. Situazione della lista dei membri e richieste di adesione ricevute da nuove organizzazioni. (Informazione)
4. Composizione del Comitato Esecutivo.
5. Nel quadro della domanda di finanziamento 2012 relativa al funzionamento del CCR MED, esame di:
 - a. Chiusura del bilancio 2011;
 - b. Relazione finale sull'attività 2011;
 - c. Presentazione del bilancio del CCR MED per l'anno 2012;
 - d. Programma di lavoro 2012;
6. Varie ed eventuali.

Nel luogo e all'ora indicata risultano presenti i Signori: Oriol Ribalta, Iolanda Piedra, Marco Sammiceli, Laura Pisano, , Gemma Quilez Badia, Oscar Sagué Plà, Esteban Graupera, Gianfranco Santolini, Massimo Brogna, Luca Stasi, Mario Ferretti, Francesco Zizzo, Mario Vizcarro, Snezana Levstik, Erika Monnati, Antonio Pucillo, Marina Illuminati, Sabela Perez-Maiz, Rosa Caggiano, Antonio Angotti, Giampaolo Buonfiglio, Mourad Kahoul, Edouard Pages, Jose Maria Gallart, José Manuel Gonzalez Gil De Bernabé, Maria Papadopoulou, Maria Josè Cornax, Massimo Coccia, Juanjo Navarro, Nicola Ferri, Camille Samier, Philippe Maraval, Abdellah Srour, Stefano Cataudella, Caroline Mangalo.

Le presenze dei partecipanti risultano anche dai fogli sottoscritti da tutti i partecipanti. I fogli presenze saranno conservati agli atti.



Mr Mourad Kahoul was elected Chair and the meeting secretary was Ms Rosa Caggiano.

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants, in particular the representatives of the GFCM, the French Ministry and the EC.

Before beginning discussion of the agenda items, the Executive Secretary suggested the addition under “any other matters” of the report of the Inter-RAC meeting held on 21st February at DG MARE in Brussels, and it was also proposed that the Meeting be informed on the forthcoming PECH audition on regionalisation. The deputy Chair Gil de Bernabé also suggested discussion of the localisation system AIS. Lastly the IVEAEMPA representative suggested that the Meeting should discuss economic diversification in working groups 3 and 5. These proposals for additions to the agenda were accepted.

Agenda item 1. Presentation by the President of the GFCM, Stefano Cataudella, and the Executive Secretary, Abdellah Srour, on the process of modernisation of the GFCM with the assistance of a task force and the first framework programme to support work towards the achievement of the goals set under this initiative.

The Chair expressed his satisfaction on seeing the participation of the GFCM Delegation at the meeting in order to illustrate the Commission’s modernization process. The presence of the GFCM President Stefano Cataudella, and the Executive Secretary, Abdellah Srour at the meeting can only serve to strengthen the collaboration between the two organizations, thus also involving the North African nations. Mr Kahoul gave the floor to the GFCM President who offered his thanks for the invitation to participate and underlined the importance of the establishment of the RACs as an effective mechanism to make the requirements of the stakeholders known. The relationship between GFCM and RACMED will improve participation and collaboration of the scientific community with that of fisheries.

Mr Srour took the floor to underline the role and the activities of the GFCM, which should be a platform for all the Mediterranean counties. The GFCM Secretary recalled the creation of a task force, an initiative which aims to modernise the Commission’s structure, he informed the Meeting that he is now organising sub-regional meetings to gather as many ideas and suggestions as possible in order to put the Commission (which will meet in Marrakech) in a position to reinforce the role of the task force. Before leaving Mr Nicola Ferri to introduce the aims of the task force in detail, Mr Srour addressed the Chair, Mr Kahoul, and proposed that the collaboration between RACMED and the GFCM be formalized with a Memorandum of Understanding so as to demonstrate the strength of this collaboration and its potential as a new tool for fisheries management in the Mediterranean.

Mr Ferri described all the stages that have led to the establishment of a task force and subsequently to the Framework Programme. First of all analysis was carried out by an external institution which studied all the agreements on which the GFCM is based from a legal point of view. The main weakness of the system was discovered to be the age of the legal elements on which it is founded, bearing in mind that the GFCM was created in 1949. The main strength was reported to be its attention towards the environment despite the differences found around the Mediterranean basin.



In order to improve awareness of the members of the communities a questionnaire has been prepared that will accompany the expert meetings and the meetings held in the FAO sub-regions.

Mr Kahoul thanked Mr Ferri for the presentation which confirmed the Mediterranean's wealth as well as the differences present in the basin, which has a vulnerable ecosystem given its semi-closed nature. The GFCM President expressed his agreement with the fact that it is necessary to act, as fisheries are an indicator which prove the need to apply adequate socio-economic and environmental policies.

The vice President, Mr Gil De Bernabé asked the GFCM delegation how collaboration between the two organisms can be realised.

Mr Srour replied, repeating that RACMED participates in all GFCM meetings as an observer and is always given the chance to express its opinions, for example RACMED could intervene in the forthcoming GFCM Annual Session in which the task force's problems will be discussed.

Agenda item II: Approval of the report of the General Assembly held in Rimini on 21st february 2011

The General Assembly report from the Rimini meeting was approved with no changes.

The Executive Secretary stressed that, as specified in the RACMED Statute, the General Assembly is required to approve the final statement of accounts the activities at the end of the current year as well as the planned work programme for the following year, the GA meeting will therefore be held in November from now on.

Agenda item III: The list of the RAC MED members and the membership requests that have been received (information)

The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that RACMED currently has 32 members and the associative process has been completed for the entry of three out of the four organisms requesting for membership: EFSA; Legambiente and ALCP. Where the membership of UNCI Pesca is concerned, the Secretariat has contacted the Italian Ministry and the association in question in order to finalise formal recognition. Their membership request will be examined during the next COMEX.

Agenda item IV: the composition of the Executive Committee

The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that at present the COMEX has some unoccupied seats: in one third four seats have been assigned while in two thirds there is just one free place because two seats are assigned by rights to Malta and Cyprus. Furthermore the Meeting was informed that requests to occupy the free seats have been received from IVEAEMPA, FEDAS, EAA, OCEANA in one third and AMOP in other two thirds.

Mr Buonfiglio, vice President, underlined that the Statute calls for election of the COMEX members every four years, in this case it would be necessary to wait until 2013 to change its composition. The proposal was therefore made to ask the EC if the requests from these organisms could be accepted as long as they sign a declaration



stating that their mandate will only begin when the four-year period finishes in April 2013. The Federcoopesca representative proposed that the Statute be formally modified because situations such as the one described are not foreseen at the moment.

Mr Buonfiglio, the vice President, reminded the Meeting that art. 10 of the Statute includes the possibility to change the Statute itself, although the procedure is long and complex. Firstly it requires a two-thirds majority in favour within COMEX and subsequently approbation from the EC and the Member States. The RACMED Secretary will draft the change to the Statute to be presented to the next COMEX in order to avoid reoccurrence of this situation.

Agenda item V: in the framework of the 2012 request for funding relative to RACMED operations, the meeting examined:

- a. Closure of accounts for 2011;
- b. Final report on activities carried out in 2011;
- c. Presentation of the RACMED budget for 2012;
- d. Work Programme for 2012

The Executive Secretary used slides to present the closure of accounts for 2011 informing the Meeting that the issue of ineligible expenditure for 2009/2010 had been resolved in collaboration with DG MARE. Furthermore, all the activities carried out in 2011 were summarized together with the goals which have been reached that are also included in the final report on activities in 2011 which will be presented to DG MARE. The meeting participants approve the accounts and the report on 2011 activities.

Using slides once more, the Secretary presented the proposed budget for 2012 which had already been presented during the Executive Committee meeting in Bari last year. The presentation described the work programme and the meetings planned for 2012; the organization of WGs 3 and 5 in Marseille was confirmed together with the Executive Committee meeting in Spain in May. The organization of WG 2 in Palermo was proposed and it was also suggested that this meeting could be brought forward in order to have enough time to prepare an Opinion if deemed necessary, to be presented before the annual ICCAT session. The proposed budget was approved.

Agenda item VI: any other matters

As discussed at the beginning of the meeting, the Executive Secretary summarised the Inter-RAC meeting organised by DG MARE in Brussels on 21st February, the report will shortly be available on the web site. The Executive Secretary underlined with particular emphasis that the discussion focused on regionalisation. The RAC Presidents also met for the first time to try to find a compromise on a common position to adopt at the forthcoming PECH hearing on regionalisation to which the RACs are invited to participate through a single



spokesperson due to the limited time available. The Executive Secretary therefore requested that any contribution on this matter should be presented by 7th March for timely insertion into the common RAC position.

Mr Gil de Bernabé, vice President recalled that during the Bari COMEX the meeting participants had proposed discussion on the consequences of the introduction of the identification systems that have become obligatory given the Regulation on control, in particular AIS.

Lastly the IVEAEMPA representative suggested that economic diversification should be discussed during the meetings of WGs 3 and 5 which will take place shortly in Marseille.

No further matters were put forward for discussion and nobody requested to speak further, therefore the Chair closed the meeting at 13.00.

