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Rome, 27 March 2012

REPORT OF THE RAC MED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the RAC MED Executive Committee was held on 20th October 2011 at the headquarters of the Bari Istituto Agronomico del Mediterraneo. The meeting was called to consider and discuss the following matters:

Agenda

1. The adoption of the report of the Executive Committee meeting held in Roma (9th June 2011).
2. The adoption of the Opinions on the Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and on Bluefin Tuna.
3. The updated list of the RAC MED members, membership fee payments for 2011 and the membership requests that have been received
4. The report on the DG MARE Conference on the status of stocks by the Vice-president Giampaolo Buonfiglio.
5. The report on the meeting of the Consultative Committee of the EC Fisheries Control Agency by the Vice President José Manuel González Gil de Bernabé.
6. The 2010 final balance. Presentation of the financial situation for 2011 (slides).
7. The presentation of the provisional budget and work programme for 2012 and the external meetings.
8. Any other matters



At the time the meeting began the following participants were present:: Mario Ferretti; Didier De Vandeuil; Alain Rico; Gianfranco Santolini; Esteban Graupera ; Gemma Quilez ; José Maria Gallart; José Manuel Gonzalez Gil de Bernabé; Kahoul Mourad ; Giampaolo Buonfiglio ; Edouard Pages; Marco Rinaldi; Francesco Zizzo; Oriol Ribalta; Ettore Iani; Luigi Giannini; Rosa Caggiano; Silvano Radin; Erika Monnati; Giorgio Testoni.

The list of participants was signed by all present and is annexed to this report.

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

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants and the Director of the IAMB, Cosimo Lacirignola, thanking him for his kind hospitality in hosting the RAD MED meeting in the Institute, bringing together people from all countries in the Mediterranean basin.

The Director of the IAMB offered his thanks and underlined that the institute was founded in 1962 and is about to celebrate 50 years of activity in the fields of training, research and cooperation: three tools at the service of the Mediterranean area. After a presentation of the activities carried out by the IAMB the Executive Secretary thanked the members of the Executive Committee for having authorised the participation of the President in the seminar organised by the GFCM on the harmonisation of current legislation in the Mediterranean countries. The agenda was introduced and presented to the meeting for approval.

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the report of the Executive Committee meeting held in Rome, Italy (9th June 2011)

The report of the Executive Committee meeting held in Rome was approved with the change requested by the WWF.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Opinions on the Reform of the CFP and on Bluefin tuna

The Chair passed the floor to the coordinator of the working group on the reform of the CFP, Giampaolo Buonfiglio, for a presentation on the Opinion proposal which resulted from the discussions held in Malta. In particular he underlined that where the system of transferable fishing concessions (TFC) is concerned, several viewpoints arose given that, to date, the EC has not indicated the scenario which will be applied to the Mediterranean. The Meeting was also reminded that the new European Fisheries Fund will almost certainly not employ its financial resources for demolition programmes. After presenting the text the Meeting was informed that some requests for changes had been presented to the Secretariat, among which there was the EAA request to underline that recreational fisheries should not be part of a TFC system, this proposal was not accepted by the participants. The WWF and Oceana comments could not be integrated into the text and therefore the Coordinator requested a summary of their comments to be inserted as a footnote to the Opinion.

The ETF representative, who hadn't been able to participate in the Malta Working Group, presented some requests for amendments to be inserted straight into the text of the draft Opinion concerning the socioeconomic impact that the reform would have on the sector. In particular it was requested that a conditionality clause be inserted in relation to the resources that are foreseen for the future European Fisheries Fund so as to protect work contracts.



The representative of Federpesca proposed an addition to the part relative to the TFC system that could be a “guarantee” for the individual vessel owners given that mortgaging the vessels no longer represents a guarantee to receive credit, especially if the new financial instrument does not make provision for subsidies if the vessel stops working once and for all.

The representative of the FNCP emphasized disapproval of the application of the TFC system, as highlighted in Malta, due to the fact that - although transition would be voluntary - there would be a high risk of distortion.

The delegate from PROFILMER expressed a general consideration concerning TFCs: this system should recognize and respect the polyvalent nature of fishing activities, it should measure economic adjustment between purchasing a vessel and the temporary allocation of a concession. Moreover PROFILMER believes that the EC has not adequately evaluated the economic aspects surrounding the application of a TFC system and the patrimonialisation of the labour market. The fear was also expressed that this system could make procedures even more bureaucratic and confused.

The Coordinator Mr Buonfiglio thanked the participants for their comments and after having registered the requested integrations the Opinion was put to the vote and thus adopted.

The Chair passed the floor to the Coordinator Mr Ferretti who presented the draft Opinion on Bluefin tuna and informed the meeting participants on the requested changes as well as the abstentions received by the Secretariat. In particular the request made by the CEPFR (representing all the recreational fishery associations) to underline the importance of the total ban on sales of Bluefin tuna caught during competitive events.

After having integrated the requests made, the draft Opinion on Bluefin tuna was approved.

Agenda item 3: The updated list of the RAC MED members, membership fee payments for 2011 and the membership requests that have been received

The Chair passed the floor to the Secretary who illustrated the list of RAC MED members and the three ministries that are up to date with fee payments. Out of 32 members only two had not paid the quota and communication had been received that they will pay at the beginning of the coming year. The Secretariat has received two further requests for membership from EFSA and Legambiente Onlus and these are awaiting approval by the Italian Government.

The Secretary presented and distributed the letter of commitment for the year 2012 and underlined that the new membership fee is less than 100 Euros, it was underlined that it is crucial that all RAC MED members sign and return the letter by 15th December so that the request for EC funding can be presented on time.

Agenda item 4: The report on the DG MARE Conference on the status of stocks by the Vice-president Giampaolo Buonfiglio

The vice president Mr Buonfiglio presented the results of the conference on the status of stocks organised by the EC in Brussels on 8th September 2011. The meeting was informed on the content of the slides presented by the chair of the STECF-SGMED, Mr Cardinale, which highlighted the scarcity of scientific data in some Mediterranean GSAs, in particular those bordering non-European countries. Mr Cardinale upheld



the belief that the capture of large amounts of small-sized specimens will make it impossible to achieve MSY unless measures are adopted to guarantee fishing gear selectivity.

The vice president informed the Meeting that he asked Mr Cardinale whether the data provided took into consideration the changes that have taken place following the variation in net mesh size half way through 2010, given that there is usually a gap of two years where the reliability of scientific data is concerned.

Agenda item 5: the report on the meeting of the Consultative Committee of the EC Fisheries Control Agency by the Vice President José Manuel González Gil de Bernabé

The vice-presidente Mr Gil de Bernabé briefly summarized the meeting of the Consultative Committee of the EC Fisheries Control Agency which all RAC groups are invited to attend. Although the meeting was only in English he could intervene in Spanish in order to declare that RAC MED had not received a full response from the EC to the Opinion on the control regulation.

Agenda item 6: the 2010 final balance. Presentation of the financial situation for 2011.

The Secretariat informed the Meeting on the closure of accounts for 2010 and communicated that, following an intense and fruitful period of collaboration with DG MARE, RAC MED only has admissible expenses and will just have to return an amount of about 10 000 Euros to the EC.

With the help of slides (available on the website), the Executive Secretary presented the current situation concerning the budget and expenses up to October 2011. The participants were informed that the only deviation from the provisional budget presented in Rome concerned the costs related to translations and interpreting due to the increase in the amount of work, documents produced and the number of meetings. To make up for the difference the Secretary informed the Meeting that an amendment request has already been presented and furthermore, as the number of members had risen from 24 to 30, the income available was higher than had been predicted.

Agenda item 7: The presentation of the provisional budget and work programme for 2012 and the external meetings

With the help of slides (available on the website), the Executive Secretary presented the provisional budget for 2012 to the participants which will be sent to the EC, the Meeting approved the budget with no changes. The 2012 work programme was illustrated with the calendar of the forthcoming RAC MED meetings divided into the following working groups:

1. The impact of EC legislation in the Mediterranean basin;
2. Pelagic Species (Bluefin tuna – Swordfish and ICCAT related issues);
3. GFCM related dossiers;
4. Dossier correlati alla CGPM;
5. Recreational fisheries;
6. Study of the socio economic impact of the CFP Reform on the single countries.



Mr Buonfiglio proposed that the first working group be brought forward to the end of February in place of the third working group so as to analyse the new EC financial instrument which will be presented at the end of November and e, as proposed by a member of the Executive Committee, also to verify the difficulties related to the use of the Automatic Identification System (AIS) as foreseen in the EC control regulation.

The Executive Committee members approved the 2012 work programme, the MED RAC external meetings and agreed on the participation of Mr Buonfiglio as a biologist in the next STECF meeting on the assessment of stocks in the Mediterranean, to be held in Madrid 16th – 20th January.

Agenda item 8: any other matters

The Secretary informed the Meeting that requests had been received from a number associations within one third that wish to become members of the Executive Committee, which currently has 17 members rather than 24 as scheduled, of which 13 in two thirds with two seats reserved by rights for Malta and Cyprus and 4 in one third. Therefore one seat is missing from two thirds and 4 seats in one third.

It was proposed and then established that a waiting list would be prepared relative to the requests expressed by the candidate organisations for participation in the Executive Committee. This list will be considered when the current structure expires.

The CEPRR representative asked RAC MED to send a request to the EC for clarification relative to the standardisation of recreational fishery practices targeting Bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean among those countries which have a quota and those which do not. The vice president proposed that this request be examined by the Executive Committee before being sent to the EC and that the consultation should be put into writing.

No further matters were put forward for discussion and therefore the Chair thanked the interpreters and closed the meeting at 16.00.

