

	GFCM	Area of Competence	Objectives	Organizational Structure	Scientific Regime
<b>RFMA Structure</b>	<p><b>General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean</b></p> <p><b>Headquarters:</b> Rome, Italy.</p> <p><b>Convention:</b> Agreement for the Establishment of a General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean. (FAO Article XIV Fisheries Body).</p> <p><b>Signed:</b> September 24, 1949. Rome, Italy.</p> <p><b>In Force:</b> February 20, 1952.</p> <p>1997 Agreement changed name to “Commission”; and adopted amendment establishing autonomous budget which came into force April 29, 2004.</p>	<p>The Mediterranean, the Black Sea and connecting waters. This area coincides with FAO Statistical Area 37. Overlapping mandate with ICCAT for Highly Migratory Fish Stocks.</p>	<p>To promote development, conservation and management of living marine resources; to formulate and recommend conservation measures; and to encourage training cooperative projects (includes aquaculture).</p>	<p>Commission, Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) 4 sub-Committees, Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) (4 Networks), Ad-Hoc Technical Panels and Working Groups (WG). Secretariat (Secretary). (FAO provided Secretariat until 2005).</p>	<p>SAC was established in 1997, meets annually and provides advice to Commission. Advice on aquaculture is provided by CAQ.</p> <p>SAC sub-Committees (SC) include: SC Stock Assessment (SCSA). Stock assessments are done for sub-Areas. Assessment of large pelagic species is done in cooperation with ICCAT. SC Statistics and Information (SCSI), SC Economics and Social Sciences (SCESS), SC Marine Environment and Ecosystem (SCMEE). Several WGs including: WG-Operational Units; GFCM/ICCAT WG- Sustainable Tuna Farming; and GFCM/ICCAT WG large pelagics. Frequently organizes scientific workshops, e.g., Measurement of Fishing Effort (2005); and Gear Selectivity (2005). CAQ has 4 networks: Social, Economic and Legal Aspects of Aquaculture (SELAM), Technology and Aquaculture (TECAM), Environment and Aquaculture (EAM) and Information Systems for the Promotion of Aquaculture (SIPAM).</p>
<b>The Fishery EA and PA</b>	<p><b>Key Species and Gear</b></p> <p><b>Transboundary stocks:</b> Hake, red mullet, striped mullet, blue and red shrimp, Norway lobster, anchovy, and sardine, dolphinfish.</p> <p><b>Highly Migratory Fish Stocks:</b> Eastern Atlantic bluefin tuna, swordfish.</p> <p><b>Gear:</b> bottom trawl, dredge, purse seine, surface longline, driftnet, artisanal gear.</p>	<p><b>Stock Status</b></p> <p><b>Highly Migratory Fish Stocks:</b></p> <p><b>Above B<sub>MSY</sub>:</b> Eastern Atlantic bluefin</p> <p><b>Declining:</b> Swordfish</p>	<p><b>Bycatch</b></p> <p>Sharks, juveniles of target species. Mitigation measures include gear restrictions for certain vessels, limits on bycatch, minimum sizes for fish that may be landed and measures to limit fishing mortality. Mediterranean Large Elasmobranchs Monitoring (MEDLEM) has protocol for mitigating shark bycatch. 2004 ICCAT recommendation prohibits catch of Atlantic bluefin &lt; 10kg in Mediterranean.</p>	<p><b>Ecosystem Approach (EA)</b></p> <p>SCMEE is mandated to address EA. In 2005, established Ad Hoc WG on EA. In 2005, based on SCMEE advice, GFCM prohibited towed dredges and trawl fisheries below 1000 m in order to protect deep water fish. In 2004 reported on the Ecosystem Effects of Fishing.</p>	<p><b>Precautionary Approach (PA)</b></p> <p>PA implementation is addressed in Article III.2 of the 1997 amended Agreement. SAC is in the process of defining reference points for specific stocks.</p>
<b>Participation</b>	<p><b>Members / Contracting Parties</b></p> <p>Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, <b>Cyprus</b>, <i>Egypt</i>, <b>EC</b>, <b>France</b>, <b>Greece</b>, Israel, <b>Italy</b>, <i>Japan</i>, Lebanon, Libya, <b>Malta</b>, <b>Monaco</b>, <i>Morocco</i>, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, <b>Spain</b>, <i>Syria</i>, Tunisia, Turkey (24 members). (24 members).</p> <p><b>Bold:</b> UNFA <i>Italics:</i> FAO Compliance Agreement</p>	<p><b>Cooperating Non-Members</b></p> <p>None at this time.</p>	<p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>Membership is open to Member nations and Associate Members of the FAO. Other States that are Members of the UN, or its specialized agencies may be admitted as members by a 2/3 majority. 1997 GFCM Agreement provides for membership of REIOs and States or Associate Members whose vessels engage in fishing in Region for stocks covered by Agreement.</p>	<p><b>Participation Criteria</b></p> <p>Members must contribute to budget and have voting privileges. Each Member is represented on the Commission by one delegate and advisors. Members are obligated to report and submit required data.</p>	<p><b>Transparency</b></p> <p>Publicly accessible website. Plenary meetings of Commission are held in public unless otherwise decided by the Commission. GFCM grants observer status for these plenary meetings to IGOs and NGOs based on FAO Guidelines. Medifamak, the Mediterranean fishing association (an industry organization) is now an official observer. All other Commission meetings are open to scientific experts, IGOs, and NGOs.</p>
<b>Monitoring, Control and Surveillance</b>	<p><b>Data Collecting and Reporting</b></p> <p>Data is collected by Members and includes catch and effort, scientific trawl survey data and acoustic surveys. Scientific data is collected by the Mediterranean International Trawl Survey Program (MEDITS) organized by EC for member States. A regional project, the Mediterranean Fishery Statistics Information System (MEDFISIS), serves as the statistical arm of the Commission, reformatting and aggregating data submitted.</p>	<p><b>Observer Program</b></p> <p>No regional observer program. In 2005, adopted general guidelines for the establishment of a control scheme which envisages an observer program and VMS, to be further examined and discussed at next GFCM session scheduled in January 2006.</p>	<p><b>Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)</b></p> <p>No VMS at this time however VMS is currently under consideration, to be discussed at 2006 meeting.</p>	<p><b>Enforcement</b></p> <p>No at-sea boarding and inspection. In 2005, adopted binding Recommendation to establish vessel register for vessels &gt; 15m. Vessels not on list are considered IUU. Enforcement essentially rests with member countries.</p>	<p><b>Catch and Trade Documentation</b></p> <p>None in place at this time.</p>
<b>Other Governance Efforts and Challenges</b>	<p><b>Decision Making</b></p> <p>Management decisions are typically taken by consensus. Other decisions, when taken by vote, require a majority. A majority of the Membership constitutes quorum. A majority of the Membership constitutes quorum. Each Member has 1 vote. Whenever vote occurs, there is a declaration of competency made by the EC and its member states. Commission may adopt and amend its own rules of procedure, by a 2/3 majority, provided consistent with General Rules of FAO. Only Recommendations adopted pursuant to Article V are binding. Resolutions are non-binding. An objection procedure exists whereby Members submit objection within 120 days of notification of a Recommendation, after which period decisions become binding.</p>	<p><b>Dispute Settlement Mechanism</b></p> <p>Article XVII provides a mechanism for the establishment of a committee to which disputes may be referred. The committee is composed of 1 member of each of the parties to the dispute and an independent chairman chosen by members of the committee. If the dispute is not settled at the committee level, it shall be referred to the ICJ. To date, Article XVII establishing a committee has never been invoked.</p>	<p><b>Cooperative Efforts</b></p> <p>Collaborates with ICCAT: e.g., GFCM/ICCAT WG on Large Pelagics has met annually since 1990; GFCM/ICCAT WG on Sustainable Tuna Farming (to define guidelines for bluefin tuna farming). Collaborates with sub-regional projects e.g., Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea (ADRIAMED); Advice, Technical Support and Establishment of Cooperation Networks to Facilitate Coordination to Support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean (COPEMED); and, Assessment and Monitoring of the Fishery Resources and the Ecosystems in the Straits of Sicily (MedSudMed). Incorporates fisheries data into FIRMS as FAO partner. Cooperates with Medifamak, exchanging information and attending meetings.</p>	<p><b>Efforts to Strengthen RFMA</b></p> <p>Amended Agreement in 1997 to establish autonomous budget (in force 2004). In 2005, agreed to establish independent Commission headquarters in Rome, Italy. In 2005, closed area below 1000 m to protect deep water fish, (habitat and spawning grounds.) Strengthened participation in SCSA and WGs in 2004. Increased participation of less developed countries in projects. Assessed PA, EA and IUU for Commission work plan. Established vessel register. Conducted independent evaluation in 2003 of SAC and CAQ.</p>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <p>Avoiding overfishing. Achieving sustainable fisheries. Strengthening capacity of Secretariat to fulfill RFMO functions and responsibilities. Controlling IUU Fishing. Ensuring timely and reliable data on catch and effort is submitted to Secretariat. Ensuring continued active participation in all SCs and WGs. Effective implementation and enforcement of decisions and measures by Member States. Increasing Membership of Coastal States. Addressing management of small-scale fisheries.</p>