



Ref: 113 /REL

Rome, 12th April 2013

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

On the 21st March 2013, at 10 o'clock, in the meeting room of the Cavour Congress Centre in Rome, the General Assembly meeting was held to discuss and deliberate the following agenda:

1. Approval of the report of the General Assembly (GA) held on 5th November 2012 in Rome
2. Closure of the 2012 financial statement – approval
3. Presentation of the budget proposal for 2013 – approval
4. Presentation, discussion and approval of the procedure for the election of the Chairman and deputies proposed by the outgoing Executive Committee
5. Election of the Chairman and deputies according to the procedure established under Agenda item 4
6. Presentation, discussion and approval of the procedure for the composition of the new Executive Committee as proposed by the outgoing Executive Committee
7. Election of the Executive Committee according to the procedure established under Agenda item 6
8. The list of members and the situation concerning payment of fees for 2013; requests for membership received from new organizations (information)
9. Any other matters

The following participants were present at the meeting: Marco Sammiceli, Laura Pisano, Oscar Sagué Plà, Gianfranco Santolini, Sebastiano Venneri, Luca Stasi, Massimo Coccia, Francesco Zizzo, Erika Monnati, Marco Rinaldi, Rosa Caggiano, Giampaolo Buonfiglio, Mourad Kahoul, Alain Rico, Jose Maria Gallart, José Manuel Gonzalez Gil De Bernabé, Maria José Cornax, Gerard Romiti, Marc Planas, Pierre D'Acunto, Eric Roch Villain, Susana Sainz-Trapaga, Paolo Guerriero, Joan Parera Molero, Iolanda Piedra, Sergio Schiavone, Paolo Pelusi, Gennaro Scognamiglio, Oriol Ribalta, Esteban Graupera, Lapo Nannucci, Giacomo Ottonello, Antonio Marzoa Dopico, Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen, Mario Vizcarro i Gianni, Eusebi Esgleas Pares, Antoni Garau Coll, Snežana Levstik, Ugo Claudio Matteoli, Genaro Amigo Chouciño.

The list of participants was signed by all those present and this document will be annexed to the final report.



The Chair of the meeting was Mr Mourad Kahoul, Mrs Rosa Caggiano acted as Secretary.

The Chair, Mr Kahoul, opened the session and welcomed the participants, wishing everyone a successful and productive meeting. Before beginning the Agenda points the Meeting was informed that, during the ExCom held the previous day, it had been decided that the GA would be requested to deal with the matter of approval of the 2012 financial statement and of the proposed budget for 2013 before discussing the procedures for the election of the Chairman and the ExCom. The GA accepted this proposal. Moreover, as there had not been time to discuss the WWF proposal concerning discards, the ExCom deferred this issue to the GA which accepted to cover it under Any Other Matters. The Agenda was approved with these changes.

Agenda item 1: Approval of the Report of the General Assembly held on 5th November 2012, Rome

The report of the General Assembly held in Rome was approved with the amendment requested by ANAPI Pesca.

Agenda item 2: closure of the 2012 financial statement – approval

The RACMED assistant presented the current situation relative to the 2012 expenditures, as the contribution from the European Commission had not yet been received, it was not possible to present the final financial statement and relative audit. The summary of accounts, annexed to this report, was first presented in the manner requested by the European Commission, subdivided according to the income and outflow. After which the same accounts were presented grouped into credits and debts, so as to provide a clearer and more correct picture of the reserve funds. The summary of accounts for 2012 was unanimously approved.

Agenda item 3: presentation of the provisional budget for 2013 – approval

The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that the provisional budget for 2013 (attached to this report) does not differ from the one presented in November, the only amendment is in the expenditure for personnel, which has been modified to allow for the appointment of a substitute for the Executive Secretary's assistant while she is on maternity leave, in order to guarantee the coordination, organization and other activities of the Secretariat in that period. The budget was presented according to the breakdown framework required by the EC and was approved with no changes.

Agenda item 4: Presentation, discussion and approval of the procedure for the election of the Chairman and deputies proposed by the outgoing Executive Committee

The Meeting was reminded that the voting system originally put forward in a letter sent by the Chairman to the ExCom, consisted of a double-ballot majority voting system for the Chairman and each deputy, considering all the ExCom members who stand at the first ballot. During the ExCom meeting held the day before this GA, however, the Committee decided instead to suggest the GA adopt an alternative voting procedure by means of lists created on the self-presentation of candidates. A lengthy discussion ensued on the voting system to be followed. The meeting participants could not reach an agreement, it was suggested that a vote should be held on the electoral procedure to utilize: a system of lists or single votes counting the majority. Out of a total of 32 members present, 18 were in favour, 12 against and 2 abstained, therefore it was decided that the procedure of electoral lists would be implemented. On the matter of the votes to be taken into consideration, following the discussions during the



ExCom, it was noted that the possibility to authorize the organizations that were absent to delegate their votes to the participants present had not been previously clarified and communicated (this is not sanctioned in the Statute nor in the internal regulations), the GA did not therefore deem it appropriate to accept proxy votes (for Pepma, Paseges, Ghaqda and CRPMEM PACA). In the light of these considerations the votes are limited to the number of members present at the GA session: 32. The two candidates for Chairman were Antonio Marzoa Dopico and Giampaolo Buonfiglio, and each presented his list. Mr Buonfiglio proposed the following vice-chairs: Marc Planas (CRPMEM LR), José Manuel González Gil de Bernabé (FNCP) e Susana Sainz-Trapaga (WWF). Given that Mr Planas did not wish to be part of Mr Buonfiglio's list, Antonio Pucillo of ETF was proposed. Antonio Marzoa Dopico proposed the following vice-chairs: Marc Planas (CRPMEM LR), Eusebi Esgleas i Parès (FNCCP) e Susana Sainz-Trapaga (WWF).

Both lists, however, were inconsistent with the guidelines within the Statute, in particular concerning the difference in nationality between the Chairman and the deputies, moreover there is no regulation governing whether the candidates listed should be physically present at the GA session. In the first list there are two Italians, although the ETF is a European organization just like the WWF and so Mr Buonfiglio put forward the name of Paul Piscopo di Ghaqda (who was not present at the meeting) instead of the ETF, and two Spanish nationals in Mr Marzoa Dopico's list.

After extensive discussion the GA agreed that the voting system should be reconsidered and the procedure to be used should be voted on once more, specifically that the lists system should be abandoned in favour of single votes for the Chairman and the deputies, starting from the presentation of candidatures. The GA approves this second option, being the more appropriate in order to avoid divisions within RACMED.

Agenda item 5: election of the Chairman and the deputies according to the procedures described under agenda item 4. Nomination of the Chairman until the appointment is revoked or until he resigns from the position, proclamation of the Terms of Reference for the Chairman.

The candidates for the role of Chairman were Antonio Marzoa Dopico (UNACOMAR) and Giampaolo Buonfiglio (AGCI Agrital). The Secretariat distributed 32 ballot papers, one for each member present with the right to vote. Each member individually placed his or her paper in the ballot box under the supervision of the former Chairman. The votes were then counted: with 21 votes against, 10 secured by Mr Marzoa Dopico and one abstention, the Assembly deliberated:

- That according to art. 5.3 of the RACMED Terms of Reference, the Chairman was named as Mr Giampaolo Buonfiglio (AGCI Agrital), born in Rome, 11/11/1955, Italian fiscal code BNF GPL55S11H501T;
- To confer the sole Administrator with the widest possible powers for both standard and extraordinary administration, except those powers which are reserved by law to the members' assembly. The Administrator will also be the legal representative of the Association.



In particular, although the list that follows is by no means exhaustive nor does it limit the mandate conferred, the following are examples of the authority assigned to the sole Administrator, who can act in the name of the Association to:

- Carry out any banking or financial procedure, such as:
- Open or close bank accounts, including those in foreign currencies;
- Impart instructions to or withdrawals from these accounts with no limit on the amount concerned, by means of back cheques made out to third parties according to the amount available in the account or on concession of credit using an overdraft facility;
- Request to take out loans in the medium and long term;
- Deposit his signature as an underwriter, personal bank guarantor and establish security deposits for revenue bonds to guarantee commitments to third parties;
- Represent the association before the fiscal authorities, tax commissions of any kind and any other legal or administrative authority, unions, etc.;
- Present motions, petitions, claims and counterclaims, naming or repealing any representatives of the association, establishing the assignment of their powers;
- Carry out any operation in offices dealing with Public Debt, Institutions for Deposits and Loans, Financial declarations to the relative offices, Post Offices, Treasuries, Customs, state and private railways, maritime companies and any other public office in Italy or abroad;
- Manage assets, bequeathments, donations, assets of those absent, foundations;
- Take on the administration of pension and welfare funds established by the professional orders;
- Take on the management of trust funds, shares and bonds, including those concerning the management of consortiums;
- On behalf of the beneficiary, take care of and manage shares, assets and other property;
- Manage assets and property;
- On behalf of the beneficiary, hold interests, quotas, equity participations in other companies, transfer these or relinquish them;
- Hold, underwrite and deposit capital in companies, including the foundation or increase of capital;
- Carry out any operation involving assets, both concerning movable or immovable property.

After his election, the new Chairman asked the Spanish associations if they had a candidate for the deputy Chairman, Mr Eusebi Esgleas Pares (FNCCP), once the Spanish deputy had been nominated the new Chairman asked the French associations for a candidate but no name was provided for nomination as deputy Chairman. Given the absence of a candidate, the new Chairman proposed the nomination of the Slovene association, KGZS as a deputy.



The GA nominated by agreement Mrs Snežana Levstik (KGZS) and Mrs Susana Sainz-Trapaga (WWF) as deputy Chairs. Mr Eusebi Esgleas Pares (FNCCP) was named deputy Chairman with the abstention of Oceana and AMOP, CNPMEM, CRPMEM CORSE, CRPMEM LR and Profilmer. Mr Pares turned down the nomination in favour of Mr Genaro Amigo Chouciño (FNCP), who was thus elected deputy Chairman. Mr Buonfiglio, Mr Chouciño, Mrs Levstik and Mrs Sig.ra Sainz-Trapaga accepted their appointment and thanked the Assembly for the trust placed in them. The former Chairman, Mr Kahoul, congratulated the new Chairman and deputies and thanked the staff who had accompanied him over the last four years, as well as all the members who had supported him in this period. He also thanked recreational fisheries underlining that it is necessary to continue working together in the Mediterranean for the conservation of the resources. He recalled the importance of having signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the GFCM last year and thus passed the chairmanship of RAC MED to the newly elected Chairman, who has the experience and knowledge necessary to deal with both the scientific aspects and the safeguarding of the fishers themselves.

Agenda item 6: Presentation discussion and approval of the procedure for the composition of the new Executive Committee as proposed by the outgoing Executive Committee.

The procedure approved by the former ExCom was presented and approved by the GA. The Secretariat recalled that an email had been sent out in which the composition of the ExCom was proposed as follows:

In the 2/3, the 16 seats are distributed as follows: 4 seats to Italy, 3 seats to France, 3 to Spain, 2 to Greece, 1 to Slovenia, 1 to Malta, 1 to the workers organization and one free seat for Cyprus. In the 1/3 it was proposed that the 8 seats should be divided as follows: 3 to the NGOs, 3 to recreational/sports fisheries, 1 to the consumers' association, 1 to an aquaculture association. The GA members approved this subdivision, with the exception of the request to reserve one seat of the 1/3 to "other groups", as an Advisory Council on aquaculture will shortly be established. The new Chairman informed the members that as three associations had left the GA (Federcoopesca, CNPMEM, CRPMEM Corse) and as the Chairman does not have the right to vote, the voting members had decreased from 32 to 28.

Agenda item 7: election of the Executive Committee according to the procedures described in point 6

The election of the seats for the 2/3 began and the Assembly was reminded that, in the light of the subdivision approved, some members automatically take their seats: AGCI Agrital, Federpesca, Federcoopesca e Lega Pesca (the four donor associations), Pepma and Paseges for Greece, Ghaqda for Malta, KGZS for Slovenia and ETF for the workers' association. Where Spain is concerned, the associations were asked if an agreement exists, and FNCCP, Unacomar, e Cepesca were confirmed. Regarding the 3 seats assigned to France, an agreement is in place whereby CNPMEM, CRPMEM PACA and CRPMEM LR take the seats. The Meeting was informed that the vacant seat belonging to Cyprus would be assigned to Croatia because RAC MED had received an official letter from the Ministry in Cyprus declaring that the associations on the island were not interested in RAC MED membership. The Assembly was requested to state if there were any abstentions or votes against the composition of the 2/3 in this way. The composition of the new 2/3 ExCom was unanimously approved. The eight seats of the 1/3 were then



elected: the GA agreed to include IVEAEMPA under “other groups” and the three environmental groups WWF, OCEANA and Legambiente. Where the three seats reserved for the recreational fishery associations are concerned the new deputy Mrs Sainz-Trapaga proposed the temporary allocation of the seat reserved for the consumers’ association to recreational fisheries. After a heated debate, the Meeting established that this seat should be kept vacant for the consumers associations. The associations representing recreational and sports fisheries agreed to divide the seats assigned to them as follows; 1 seat appointed to EAA with IFSUA as substitute, 1 seat appointed to FIPS-Mer with FIPSAS as substitute and the third seat to Big Game Italia with CEPRR as substitute. The Big Game Italia representative expressed disapproval and refused to share the seat with another member. The third seat was therefore appointed to CEPRR. The Executive Secretary requested that the Meeting vote on this sub division of the 1/3, approval was achieved with only ANAPI Pesca abstaining. The new Chairman asked for all the official nominations for each ExCom member association to be communicated to the Secretariat

Before moving on to point 8 of the Agenda, Mr. Buonfiglio recalled that it will be necessary to modify the Statute and the RAC MED internal regulation to implement the procedural rules. He therefore invited the GA members to send the Secretariat all the proposals for integration and amendment to the Statute by the end of April, so that these changes can be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting. In the same way, the Secretariat should receive any proposals concerning the internal regulation, the running of the working groups, the nomination and role of the coordinators. The new Chairman suggested the establishment of an *ad hoc* working group during the coming ExCom meeting. RAC’s operative procedures will need to be more flexible in view of the reform to the CFP and the possible changes in the structure of the Regional Advisory Councils, and also in the light of the request from DG MARE to change working methods with the aim of benefiting more regularly from scientific data on which proposals and opinions resulting from the WGs should be based. The Working Groups could also be more circumscribed, and established during the year on an *ad hoc* basis. The new Chairman also entreated those members with an objection or criticism to express concerning RAC MED actions to contact first the Secretariat, then the Chair, after which the ExCom, rather than going directly to DG MARE. Mr. Buonfiglio made reference to the letter sent by IVEAEMPA to the ExCom letter and to DG MARE, he expressed his astonishment that this association had not previously sent any kind of official complaint to RACMED.

The IVEAEMPA expressed her hope that the new Chairman would be in a position to give clearer answers, she asked the Secretariat to send the names to be communicated to DG MARE in order to prepare invitation for a conference on the Mediterranean that will be held at the beginning of May in Spain (Balearic Islands). The new Chairman confirmed that this will be done.

Agenda item 8: The list of members and the situation concerning payment of fees for 2013; requests for membership received from new organizations (information)

The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting that the number of RAC MED members has increased from 38 to 40, because the procedures for membership had been completed by two of the four applicants: : Comité Régional des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins de la Corse (CRPMEM CORSE) and the Organizzazione dei Produttori e



Pescatori della vongola della Sacca di Goro e Gorino (O.P.G.G.). Membership applications from Federconsumatori, (the Italian consumers' association) and the Croatian Chamber of Commerce (HOK) are still being processed. These applicants will be able to become full members from July unless there are any postponements.

Where membership fees are concerned, the Executive Secretary recalled that the deadline for payment is drawing near (2nd April), and that the rules state that non-payment is a reason for expulsion from the association. She therefore invited any members with financial difficulties to inform the Secretariat so that note could be taken if the situation is only temporary.

Agenda Item 9: Any Other Matters

As decided at the beginning of the meeting, the Chairman began presenting the proposal prepared by the WWF on the issue of discards, however there was not enough time to develop a proper debate between the participants and it was therefore suggested that this matter could be dealt with in writing, in order to receive any comments or amendments to the text. This proposal was accepted and the participants were invited to send any contributions by Friday 29th March.

The Chairman informed the Meeting on the possible evolution of the current situation and on the procedural issues that will need to be dealt with during the three-way discussions underway. If the Irish presidency manages to have the basic regulation on the reform to the CFP approved, from 1st January 2014 the discards ban for pelagic fisheries would be put into practice in the Mediterranean. In order to provide RAC MED's contribution, it would be ideal to be in a position to offer technical proposals on this matter; furthermore it would be necessary to organize an *ad hoc* Working Group on small pelagic species in the Adriatic between Italy, Slovenia and Croatia, inviting the national Administrations, this way it will be possible to attain results supported by scientific data by the summer.

The Executive Secretary suggested that the matter of discards should be discussed during the forthcoming Working Group that will probably be held in Morocco on 18th April. Where the *ad hoc* Working Group on the Adriatic is concerned, she requested the collaboration of the associations in question for the logistic and organizational aspects.

The IVEAEMPA representative underlined that she had requested the organisation of an *ad hoc* Working Group on economic diversification in the past and that this would not be possible due to the lack of available funds. The Executive Secretary reminded the Meeting that the issue of diversification was inserted into the discussion of Working Group 5 so as to optimise the resources available.

No further matters were put forward for discussion and nobody requested to speak further, the Chair therefore thanked the participant and the interpreters and closed the meeting at 17.00.

The minutes were adopted by written procedure with the contrary vote of Big Game Italia.

