



Ref.:170/REL

Rome, 27 May 2013

Report of Working Group (WG4) on recreational fisheries

Rome, Palazzo della Cooperazione, 28th February 2013

Participants: see attached list

Coordinator: Esteban Graupera

Annexed documents: Agenda, *FAO GFCM Studies and Reviews n. 81*.

1. Working Group 4 met in Rome on 28th February 2013 in order to continue the work begun last year and to attempt harmonisation of current legislation on recreational fisheries in Europe. Discussion was based on the FAO publication "*GFCM Studies and Reviews n. 81*", the reference document on marine recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean.

2. The RAC MED executive secretary opened the meeting, thanking the participants and the associations, she took the opportunity to inform those present that she would later be leaving for the DG MARE INTER-RAC meeting in Brussels and therefore apologized for not being able to stay until the end of the session. She expressed the hope that the Working Group would continue collaborating actively, in the same efficient way already established by email, with the aim of achieving a common position to present to the ExCom. Lastly she recalled the rules of procedure for RAC MED Working Groups and passed the floor to the Coordinator.

3. The Coordinator, Esteban Graupera, asked the participants to approve the meeting's Agenda. The IFSUA representative suggested that items 5 and 6 be inverted and requested clarification of item 7. The Coordinator explained that the Agenda was prepared in the order given in order to promote the debate that would lead to the adoption of a document to present to the ExCom. The Agenda was approved with no changes.

4. Before informing the meeting on the work carried out during the GFCM SAC SCESS meeting held in Rome the previous week, the Coordinator, summarized the SCESS sub committee's activities over recent years. Mr Graupera explained how the definition of recreational fisheries had come to be inserted into the FAO glossary and that in 2011 it was recommended that recreational fisheries should be regulated in national legislation by means of the application of a fisheries licence system.

In January 2012, the Coordinator presented the RAC MED Document prot.124/AV (5 May 2011) to the SCESS and announced that Working Group WG4 would work on a proposal of joint regulation.

In 2012 RAC MED had set itself the goal of adopting a document entitled "A basic Homogeneous regulation of the marine recreational fishing in the EU Mediterranean", however the WG did not manage to reach an



agreement in time to present this document to the SCESS 2013. All the WG participants agreed that this discussion should continue in order to draft a document that represents, as far as possible, a shared position.

5. According to the Agenda, the Coordinator passed to item 4, illustrating the WG activities in 2012 and analysing the reasons behind the letter written by EAA and IFSUA that led to the suspension of activities. After having described the methodological aspects, the Coordinator explained his position and the way in which the WG participants' comments had been acknowledged and employed. He specified that the comments had been selected according to their significance to the document; when agreement had not been possible the comments were acknowledged as a "*minority statement*"

6. EAA and IFSUA stated that, in their opinion, it would be more appropriate if all comments made by the participants were inserted, this would enrich the document and the final text to be submitted to the ExCom would reflect all participants' positions. The Coordinator explained that this is not possible in a document that expresses a position.

7. The Meeting agreed on the need to prepare new rules of procedure for Working Group activities, in order to determine the way in which comments are received and accepted, the working methods and the nomination of a deputy for the Coordinator. EAA and IFSUA proposed rules to be presented to the ExCom in order to be in a position to work with fewer uncertainties. The Coordinator expressed his agreement with the concept of adopting a common system for all the RAC MED Working Groups, not only for WG4.

8. The WG participants all elected to corroborate the work carried out to date and agreed to continue with the activities, striving to reach a common position. These include, for example, the need to clearly define and regulate fisheries, the volume of catches, the number of hooks and the characteristics of these hooks.

9. On the matter of hooks used when the fish are thrown back, the participants agreed to use a type of hook which offers the highest survival rate possible.

10 The EAA representative did not accept declaration of the target species, because the fisher cannot foresee the composition of the catch; where the "*daily bag limit*" is concerned, she agreed that for some species there is a numeric limit but underlines that a weight limit is also important. Not all participants agreed on this matter of a double limit. In order to facilitate the meeting, the participants were given tasks according to each individual's personal knowledge and competencies

11. There was no more time available and therefore the Coordinator thanked the participants, and in particular, as well as the interpreters, closing the meeting at 17.00. The participants agreed to continue the discussions by email, in the hope that in the meantime amendments/additions would be approved for the Rules of Procedure regarding the establishment and management of the RAC MED Working Groups.

