



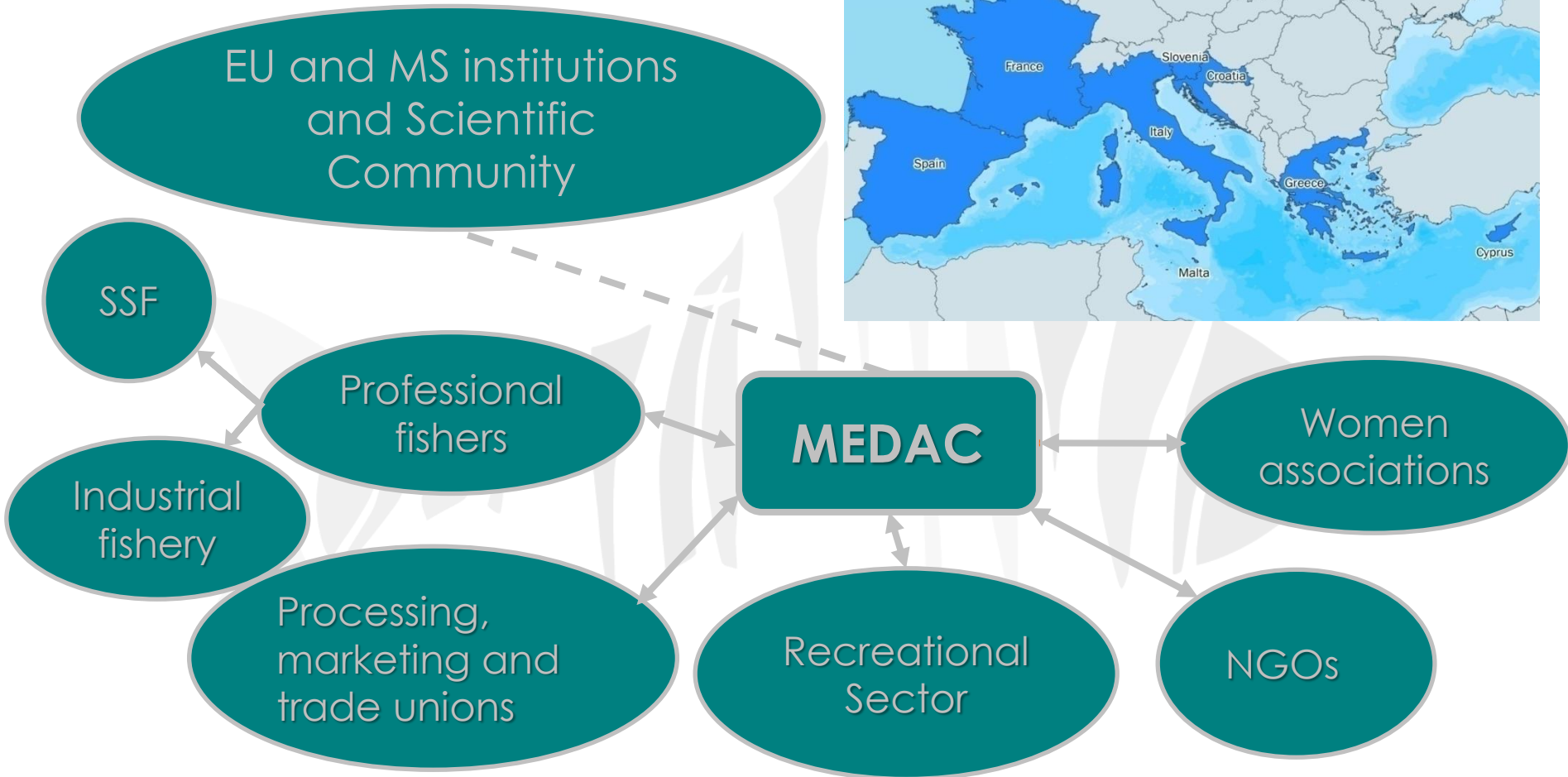
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## MEDAC contribution to the GFCM SRCs and WGMSE



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# The Mediterranean Advisory Council



From 2022 also the organizations representing or having direct or indirect economic interests linked to the **use of the marine environment or maritime space** other than commercial fishing, aquaculture or the processing, marketing, distribution and retail of seafood

EC DEL.REG.(EU)2022/204 of 8 Dec 2021

# The Mediterranean Advisory Council

The role of MEDAC includes the **preparation of advice on fisheries management focused on sustainability**, in support of the fisheries sector in the Med, to be submitted to the Member States and the European institutions in order to facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the CFP; MEDAC also proposes technical solutions and suggestions, related to joint recommendations too (ex. Art. 18 Reg.1380 / 2013) at the request of the Member States.



en.med-ac.eu/pareri\_lettere.php



2023  
advice and letters

- 
[MEDAC advice on the Action Plan to protect and restore marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries](#)

- 
[DG MARE reply letter to MEDAC advice on the indicators available for the purpose of assessing the socioeconomic impact of the management plans](#)

- 
[Joint AC letter on EC support for promotion of ACs' role](#)

- 
[MEDAC advice on the indicators available for the purpose of assessing the socioeconomic impact of the Med MAPs](#)

- 
[Annex\\_MEDAC advice on on the indicators available for the purpose of assessing the socioeconomic impact of the Med MAPs](#)

- 
[DG MARE reply to MEDAC advice on Fishing Opportunities 2023](#)


...And  
Others...



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## MEDAC contribution on Demersal fisheries in the Strait of Sicily



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Based on the presentations and discussions that emerged at the MEDAC Focus Group meeting on the Strait of Sicily (27th February 2024),  
**this contribution has been agreed to promote a more balanced exploitation of demersal resources in the area.**

The socioeconomic situation of the community fleet operating in the Central Mediterranean<sup>1</sup> highlighted a **significant increasing in fishing effort by the northern African fleet despite the strong reduction operated by the EU fishing vessels.**



GFCM SRC-CM Extranet - Sharepoint




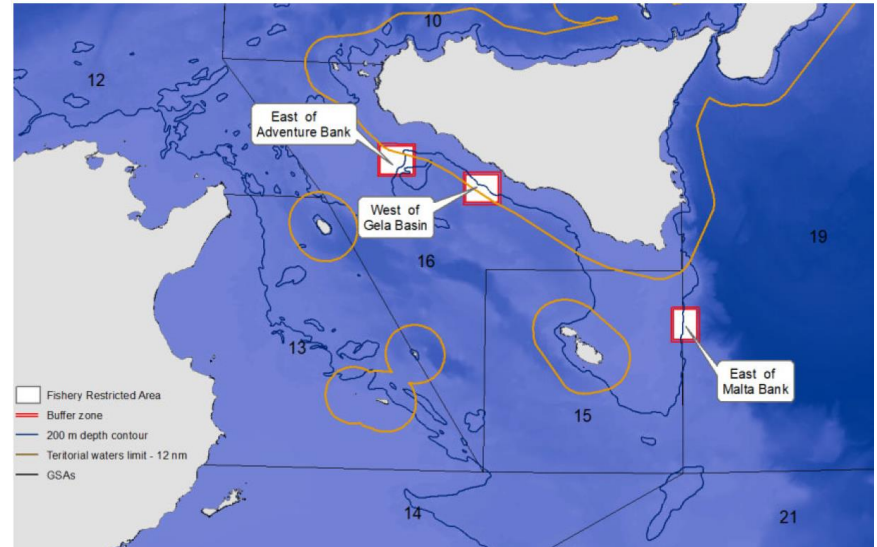
So, it is recommended that the **maximum fishing effort** on stocks **be allocated in proportion to the fishing mortality of the various fleets operating in the region**, as derived from GFCM stock assessments.

<sup>1</sup> [https://med-ac.eu/files/documentazione\\_eventi/2024/02/4\\_rsabatella\\_strait\\_of\\_sicily\\_27\\_02\\_24.pdf](https://med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_eventi/2024/02/4_rsabatella_strait_of_sicily_27_02_24.pdf)

Similarly, to the approach taken on the northern side of the SoS, and according to the Rec. GFCM/45/2022/4 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily and to the GFCM 2030 strategy, it is deemed appropriate to identify some **Fishery Restricted Areas (FRAs)** to reduce the catches overexploited fish populations such as mullet, hake (HKE), and deep water rose shrimp (DPS) and to protect sensitive habitats and VMEs, **also on the southern side of the SoS.**

The main stable nurseries of HKE off the African coast have been identified<sup>2</sup>

 Further surveys would be needed to reinforce the actual knowledge. Special attention by GFCM and DG MARE should be paid to speed up this process.



<sup>2</sup> [https://med-ac.eu/files/documentazione\\_pareri\\_lettere/2024/04/74\\_medac\\_advice\\_sos\\_src-cm.pdf](https://med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2024/04/74_medac_advice_sos_src-cm.pdf)

Once a level playing field in the whole area will be reached through the implementation of the above-mentioned steps, further common management measures should be considered, especially regarding:

- More effective temporal closures for deep-water red shrimp (DWRS) stocks
- Spatial closure (1000-800 m) in the SoS
- Maritime spatial planning considering the socioeconomic impact



More information on the **proposed common management measures** available on the relevant agenda items of the GFCM SRC-CM.



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## MEDAC contribution on spatial management, MRF and Stakeholders engagement



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## MEDAC contribution on the state of the art for *Pagellus* *Bogaraveo* in GSAs 1 and 2



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## MEDAC Contribution ON THE STATE OF ART *Pagellus bogaraveo* in the GSAs 1 and 2 (Ref. 94/2024)

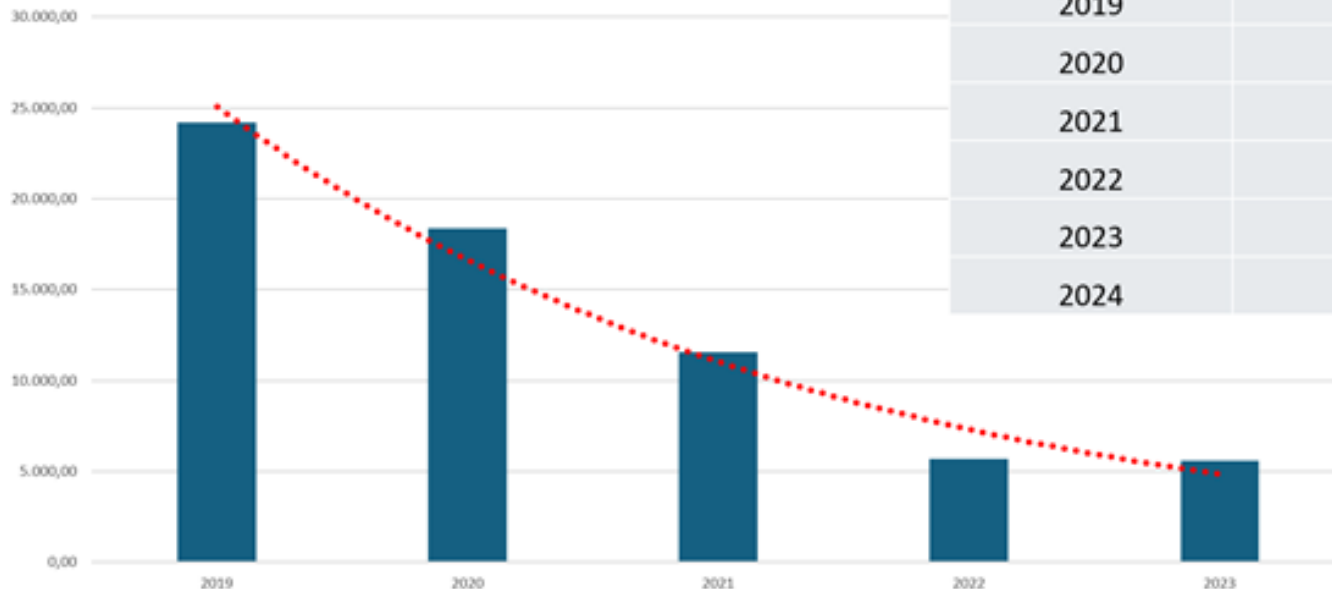
During the MEDAC FG of West Med held online on 10 April, an update on the state of the art of *Pagellus bogaraveo* in the GSAs 1 and 2 has been presented covering the following aspects:

- the state of the stock;
- the main socioeconomic indicators of the fleets operating in the area and the trends in the last years;
- the management decisions shared so far at the GFCM level.



The following graph (Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Agricultura, Pesca, Agua y Desarrollo Rural) highlights that the catches of *Pagello bogaraveo* by the EU fleet drastically decreased in the last 5 years

EU-Spain Blackspot catches 2019 - 2023



Many factors can be considered the drivers of this drastic reduction and the consequent socioeconomic impact on the EU fleet, such as the Covid and the fuel crisis.

However, **the MEDAC deems urgent to speed up the harmonization process of the management measures in the area** already started by the previous adopted GFCM decisions.





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## MEDAC contribution on small pelagics in the Adriatic Sea

Management of quotas and importance of other  
environmental factors for the small pelagics



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During the MEDAC Focus Group on Adriatic Sea the MEDAC members operating in the Italian side of the Adriatic Sea raised up the **difficulties in reaching the available quotas for small pelagics**.

The following reasons can be behind this problem:



- **No generational turnover**, causing a growing difficulty in completing the crews, and then the fishing days loss
- **The increase of operating costs** of fishing activities
- A significant **recovery of bluefin tuna stock** which, given the high levels of daily energy requirements of the species, may have become an important factor in the decrease of small pelagic stock;

One more possible reason behind this problem:



- a **progressive reduction of the nutrient load from rivers** (nitrate directives, greater attention to the purification of urban discharges, etc.), which may have reduced the abundance and phyto-zooplanktonic biodiversity, **causing a decrease in the biomass of small pelagic** in the Adriatic Sea due to inter- and intra-specific food competition (i.e. Gulf of Lion).

In the same direction of reduction of the phyto-zooplankton biomass, the ongoing **climatic changes** are also working, with their **negative effects mainly caused by the rise in water temperature.**

## ABOUT QUOTA'S ALLOCATION

**MEDAC deems needed to radically change the management approach for small pelagic fisheries because, despite the substantial reduction in fishing effort in recent years, official data collection shows that the quotas allocated in 2022 are not being met by any of the Member States concerned.**



**There has thus been no positive response to a management approach that has been in place for several years.** Moreover, some scientific evidence suggests that professional fishing activity is no longer to be considered the main cause of the decline in small pelagic stocks.



## ABOUT QUOTA'S ALLOCATION

Therefore, the scientific assessment on which management decisions are based should no longer focus exclusively on fishing effort, but it should have a **holistic approach.**



A viable small pelagic fisheries management system should over time be able to ensure stability and economic and social sustainability of the fishery; so far this has not been the case.

**It is not a request for more fishing opportunities, but it is an alarm in response to a situation that seems to indicate that the current management system is not working properly.**

## ABOUT QUOTA'S ALLOCATION

One possible way could be that the quota's allocated at national level will be managed by the fishery operators themselves, preferably through the Producers Organizations.



The scientific research, on the basis of which national fishing quotas are allocated, should then extend its scope of investigation beyond the mere assessment of the size of the resource, **considering more carefully at least those issues that seem to be more related to the problem of the low stock size of small pelagic,** such as the environmental factors.

# MEDAC contribution on the “GFCM MSE for Stakeholders” Ref.:97/2024

The MEDAC recommended that the process of stakeholder consultation on the best HCR was done **on the basis of important information related to the socio-economic aspects**. In particular, the availability of the following results to assure a complete information to the Stakeholders for their advice:



- the results of the performance of the tested HCRs;
- the comparison of the performance resulting by the tested HCRs;
- the economic analysis of the different management alternatives considering the relevant indicators.

## **The socio-economic analysis of the different management alternatives should consider the following relevant indicators:**

- ✓ Prices by year
- ✓ Discounted gross revenue obtained from anchovy and overall by year.
- ✓ Discounted Cash flow by fleet and overall by year.
- ✓ Probability of negative cash flow for each fleet by year.
- ✓ Comparison between the mean wage by country and the estimated wage by FTE by year.

**Therefore, the results obtained by testing the HCRs should be further elaborated by a bioeconomic model to provide a complete information on the different scenarios.**

Lot of uncertainties are related to the factors influencing the fluctuations of small pelagic stock in the Adriatic Sea, **mainly the environmental variables**, such as nutrients flow.



**Any changes to the current management measures** will have to take into account the effects of further limitations on the economy of fishing enterprises, **allowing for a multi-annual economic planning** and not their closure.



MEDAC contribution on useful steps to face the most invasive species in the Adriatic Sea:  
the Blue Crab (*Callinectes sapidus*)



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During the meeting of the MEDAC FG on Adriatic Sea held on April 9, **further information on the blue crab invasion** and about possible actions to face this occurrence was provided.



By Agriteco, 2023

The local expert (Agriteco) explained that **the explosion of the blue crab catches occurred in summer 2023**, although its invasive presence had already been observed for some years.

The lagoon fishers using fixed nets were the first observers of the occurrence:

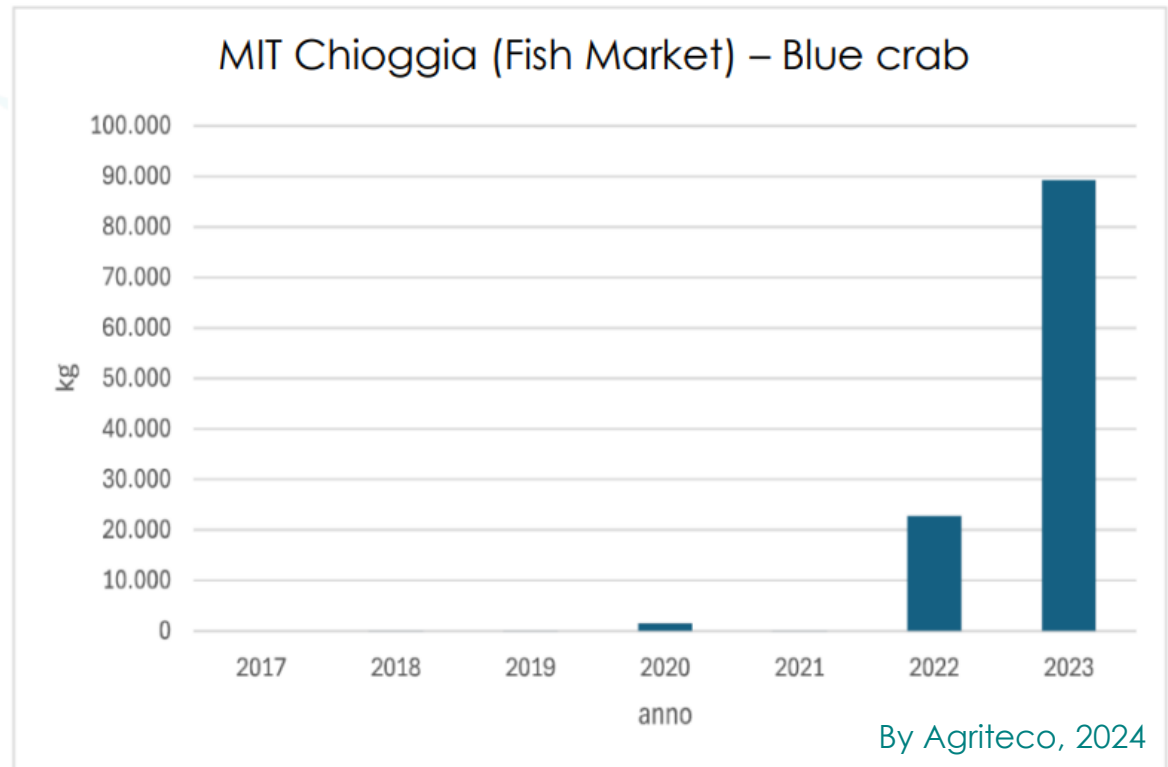
2017, a few specimens/week

2018-2019, a few specimens/week

2020-2021, tens of kg/week

2022, tens of kg/day

**2023, hundreds of kg/day**



The graph does not include all the enterprises impacted in the area, but the data is meaningful in terms of trend.



The local expert (Agriteco) highlighted the **huge economic damage to the local fishing companies impacted by the invasion of the blue crab**. The impacts are related to the:

- Decline in the marine resources and consequent decrease in catches and income;
- Elevated costs of fixing the damaged fishing nets;
- Need of new markets and processing activities;
- Blue crab disposal expenses.



To date the overall damage to the fishery sector is not quantifiable, because the major impact is on the clam's population which is a prey of the blue crabs.

**In fact, the drastic reduction in landings of clams and the related impact on the turnover of this sector in the Delta Po caused a reduction estimated from 50 mln to zero (source: Agriteco).**

The MEDAC deems appropriate to develop **the following pilot projects to better understand this invasion, its impact, and the possible actions (1/2):**



- The **data collection** aimed to provide all the information on the landings of blue crabs in the affected area,
- The **interaction between the blue crab (*C. sapidus*) with the Mediterranean green crab (*C. aestuarii*)** and the related effects,
- Assessment of the blue crab impact on the **traditional fishing activities** in the lagoon (“serragianti”) and along the coastline.

The MEDAC deems appropriate to develop the following pilot projects (2/2):

- Investigating the **possibility of inclusion in other production chains**, such as those for feed, flour, cosmetics, integrators etc. and exploring the properties of the carapace rich in Chitin, Magnesium and Calcium
- **Verifying the interactions between blue crab and ctenophores (*Mnemiopsis leidyi*)**



- **Studying the Tunisian model to search for solutions to be applied locally:**

- o Step 1 – training of operators (more than 600)
- o Step 2 – involvement of fish-processing companies to test the potential for exploiting blue crab
- o Step 3 – startup of processing and export companies

Monitoring activities, studies on blue crab mortality and its potential distribution should be the basis for a blue crab management plan.

Such plan could include **testing the deployment of new types of pots and o traps to give priority to catching females** (as they reproduce only once in their lifetime and lay millions of eggs).

**Measures to incentivize the marketing of the blue crab should be implemented as well.**



**The MEDAC considers that action cannot be delayed, and it is necessary to speed up and reduce the timeframe for the execution of the interventions.**



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## MEDAC contribution on spatial management



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## Involvement of stakeholders on new Fishery Restricted Areas (FRAs) - Ref.:103/2023

[...] Taking the many positive experiences to date as examples (e.g., the Jabuka Pit/Fossa di Pomo process), it is clear that **effective involvement of the stakeholders** from the earliest stages of the process leading to a proposal **to establish a new FRA** not only **increases the available knowledge** on the areas in question, but also **favors compliance by the fishers** working in that area.



[...] considering the statutory mandate of Advisory Councils and recognizing the importance of ensuring a solid stakeholder engagement from the early stages of the process the MEDAC candidates to be a **hosting forum for the presentation and discussion to provide input to any new proposal to establish FRAs in the Mediterranean that is of relevance to the EU fleet.**

The Directive 2014/89/EU of the EP and of the Council establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (MSP) defines MSP as:

**“a process by which the relevant Member State’s (MS) authorities analyse and organise human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic and social objectives.”**

Article 4

## **Establishment and implementation of maritime spatial planning**

1. Each MS shall establish and implement MSP.

Article 8

## **Setting-up of maritime spatial plans**

*“MS shall take into consideration relevant interactions of activities and uses. [...] possible activities and uses and interests may include:*

***aquaculture areas, fishing areas,** [...] extraction of energy and other resources [...], and for the production of energy from renewable sources, maritime transport [...], military training areas, **protected areas,** scientific research, submarine cable and pipeline routes, tourism, cultural heritage.»*

Directive 2014/89/EU of the EP and of the Council establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (MSP)

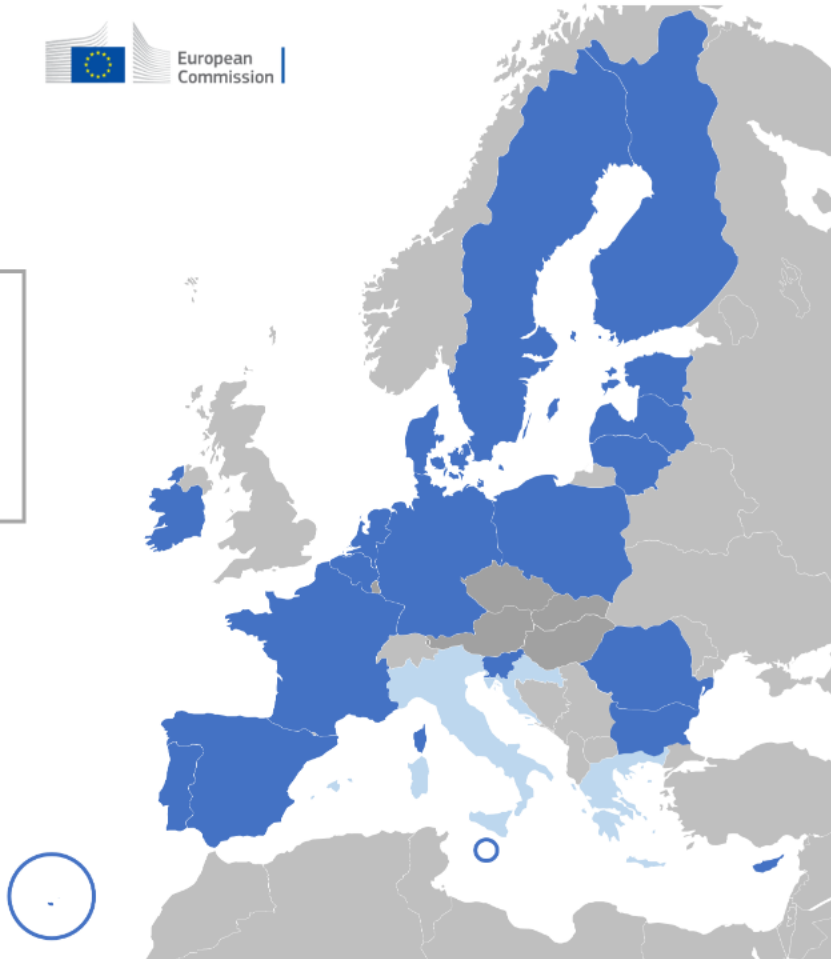
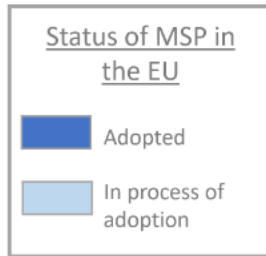
## Article 9

### Public participation

1. Member States shall establish means of public participation by informing all interested parties and **by consulting the relevant stakeholders** and authorities, and the public concerned, at **an early stage in the development of maritime spatial plans**, in accordance with relevant provisions established in Union legislation.
2. Member States shall also ensure that the **relevant stakeholders** and authorities, and the public concerned, have access to the plans once they are finalised.

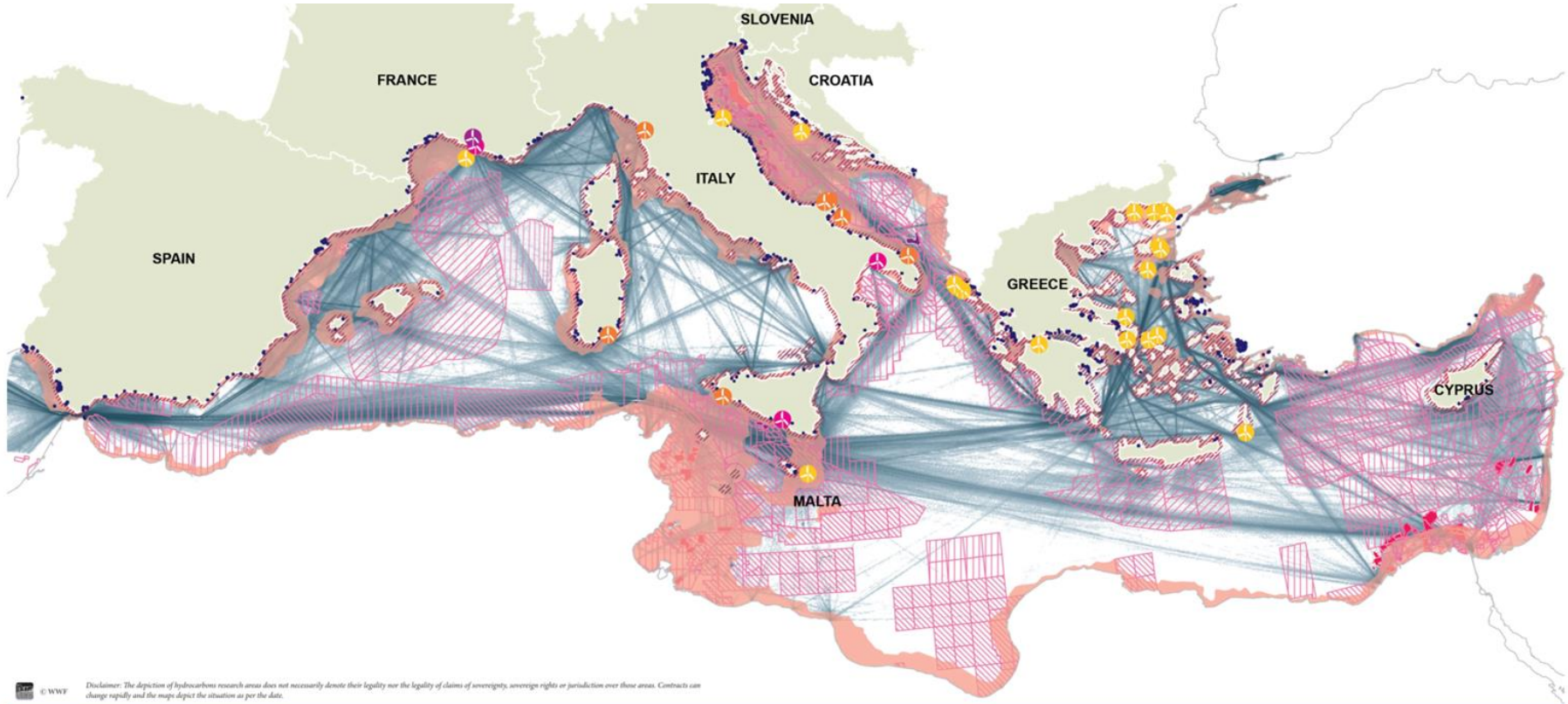


## Marine Spatial Planning- Status of MSP in the EU



<https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/msp-practice/countries>

## MSP in the Mediterranean (source: WWF – Med trends) An example of the interactions of the different activities occurring in the basin



**DENSITY OF VESSELS TRACKS**  
TOTAL OF DIFFERENT VESSELS INVOLVED: 38 897  
Interpolation / Log scaling / Year 2014

HIGH  
MAX = 166 966\*    MEDIAN = 418\*    MIN = 1\*

\*In 1 pixel of 1x1 km  
Source: AIS density maps by **navama** technology for nature

**OIL AND GAS CONTRACTS**

OPEN AREA    DEVELOPMENT AREA  
BIDLOCK AREA    PRODUCTION AREA  
EXPLORATION AREA    RELINQUISHED AREA

Sources: DrillingInfo (april 2015)  
National sources collected by WWF (2015)    **drillinginfo**

**WIND FARMS PROJECTS**

● CONCEPT/EARLY PLANNING  
● CONSENT APPLICATION SUBMITTED  
● CONSENT AUTHORISED  
● PARTIAL GENERATION/UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Source: Offshore4C (2014)

**EXPLOITATION OF LIVING RESSOURCES**

● AQUACULTURE FARM LOCATION  
■ POTENTIAL EU RECREATIONAL FISHING ZONE  
■ POTENTIAL PROFESSIONAL FISHING ZONE

Sources: WWF (2015), JRC-ISPRA (2012), national sources collected by WWF  
Note: Data available only for EU countries

**Professional fishing is the sector most affected by the growing development of the maritime economy:**

- Fishing zones will be reduced in particular along coastal areas due to the increasing development of coastal activities;
- Pressures exerted by other sectors on marine ecosystems (e.g. additional fish catch from recreational fisheries, some land-based pollution types, underwater noise generated by ships and by oil and gas activities) are growing and may impact fish stocks directly or indirectly.

Figure 2. Potential spatial interactions between sectors

## **Marine Spatial Planning- The letter on MSP and role of MEDAC based on a questionnaire on MSP process**

The MEDAC WG3 meeting held on 10 April agreed that **involving MEDAC members in MSP processes is crucial** for the effective and sustainable management of maritime activities. Its constituency is eager to contribute to the development of marine spatial plans that balance MSP objectives with the needs of the fishing industry.

### **Specific Requests to EC:**

- 1. Establish mechanisms to ensure active participation of MEDAC members in national and EU-funded MSP initiatives,**
- 2. So as to incorporate the knowledge and expertise of MEDAC members into the decision-making processes related to MSP.**

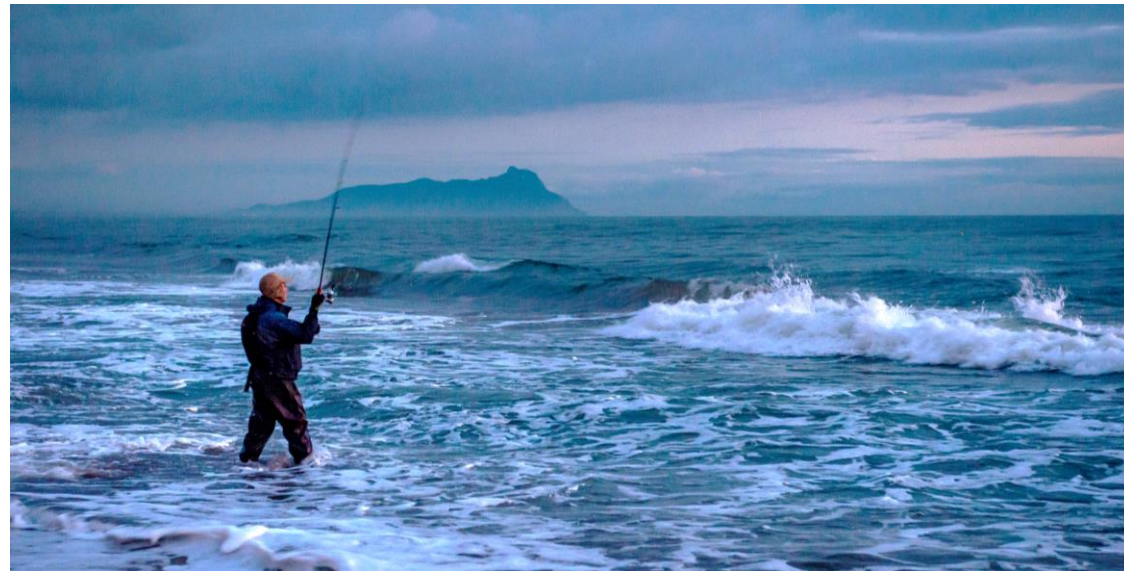


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## MEDAC contribution on recreational fisheries



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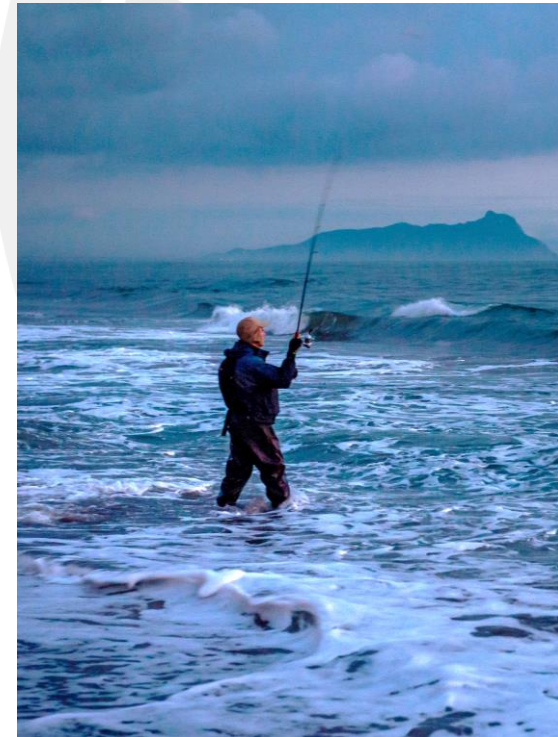
## MEDAC contribution on the Marine Recreational Fishery (MRF) – Ref. 65/2024

During the WG4 meeting held on 28 February in Rome, the new management measures of the **revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation** (Reg. EU 2023/2842) related to the Marine Recreational Fisheries were analysed. Considering the comparison with the previous version of the control Regulation regarding the MRF, **the MEDAC appreciates the progress done so far.**



The MEDAC expresses its disappointment about the categorization of **"serious and not serious infringements"** for the sale of MRF fishery products (Annex IV) **because it should always be considered serious**, without this decision being delegated to the Member States (MS).

The MEDAC deems appropriate that this matter will **be harmonized** at EU level and not left to the discretion of each Member State.



**MEDAC recognizes the European Commission's efforts to enhance understanding of the impact of marine recreational fisheries on stocks.**



While acknowledging the inclusion of multispecies surveys agreed upon at the regional level in the Data Collection Framework, **MEDAC proposes expanding catch collection efforts beyond the species already specified in the new Control Regulation.**

This expansion would encompass:

- a) species/stocks with quotas and/or catch and bag limits from January 10, 2026;**
- b) species/stocks subject to Union-set fishing opportunities,** covered by MAP, subject to LO, and having a significant impact on fishing mortality (based on scientific advice from STECF, ICES, etc.).



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## Overview of the MEDAC contribution on stakeholder engagement



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## Article 44 - Tasks of Advisory Councils

[...] 2. **Advisory Councils** may:

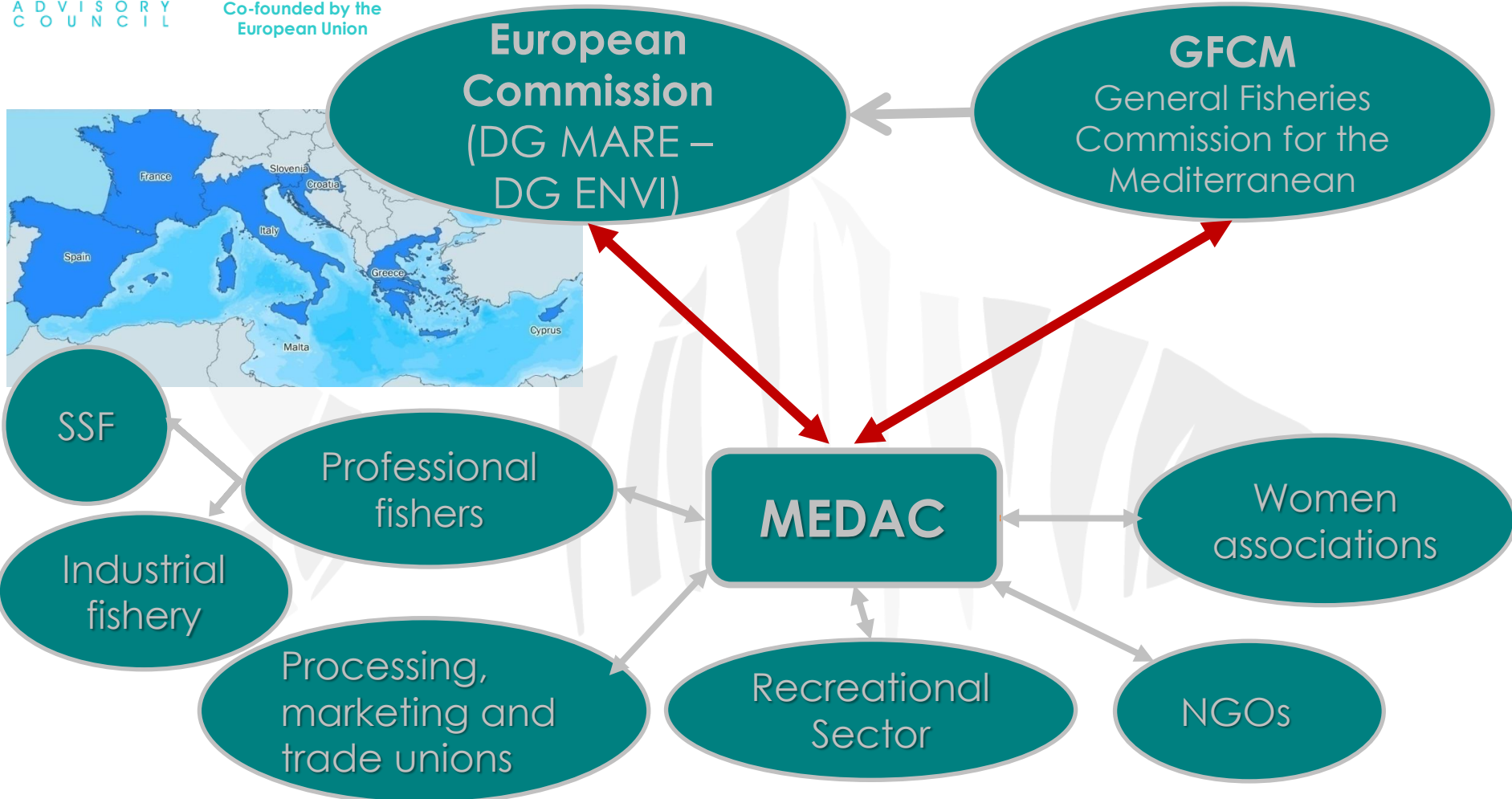
a) **submit recommendations and suggestions** on matters relating to the management of fisheries and the socioeconomic and conservation aspects of fisheries and aquaculture **to the Commission and to the Member State concerned**, and, in particular, recommendations on how to simplify rules on fisheries management;

(b) inform the Commission and Member States of **problems relating to the management and the socio-economic and conservation aspects** of fisheries and, where appropriate, of aquaculture in their geographical area or field of competence and propose solutions to overcome those problems;

(c) **contribute, in close cooperation with scientists, to the collection, supply and analysis of data necessary for the development of conservation measures. [...]**



# From the MEDAC to the Management process



From 2022 also the organizations representing or having direct or indirect economic interests linked to the **use of the marine environment or maritime space** other than commercial fishing, aquaculture or the processing, marketing, distribution and retail of seafood

EC DEL.REG.(EU)2022/204 of 8 Dec 2021

**Working Groups** are established on a permanent basis and have the role of assisting the Executive Committee in the preparation of the opinions and joint recommendations.

- WG 1: Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (Regionalization, discards management plans, multiannual management plans)
- WG 2: Big Pelagic Fishes (BFT-E - SWO-MED and other species ICCAT)
- WG 3: Green Deal
- WG 4: Recreational Fisheries
- WG 5: Small-Scale Fisheries and Socio-Economic Impact

**Focus groups** are set up for a specific purpose, their duration is limited.

- Focus Group on Adriatic Sea (IT, SI, HR)
- Focus Group on Western Mediterranean (IT, FR, ES)
- Focus Group on the Strait of Sicily (IT, MT)
- Focus Group on Equal Opportunities
- Focus Group Eastern Mediterranean (CY, GR)

## upcoming events



20 June 2024  
FG equal opportunities- June 2024



20 June 2024  
WG3-June 2024



20 June 2024  
WG2-June 2024



19 June 2024  
WG1-June 2024

## past events



10 April 2024  
FG WMed 10 april 2024



10 April 2024  
WG1 +WG5 april 2024



9 April 2024  
FG Adriatic 9 april 2024



9 April 2024  
WG3 april 2024

The MEDAC workplan on the key topics is annually agreed with EC and approved by MEDAC members



**47 MEDAC members**

**5 Working Groups and 5 Focus Groups**



WGs: CFP, large pelagics, Recreational Fisheries, SSF, socioeconomic impact, Green Deal

FGs: Adriatic Sea, West Med, Strait of Sicily, Equal opportunities, East Med



**Executive Committee**



**Shared advice to EC and MSs**  
**on the future of fishery in the Mediterranean**  
(by consensus or by majority including minority statements)



2024

advice and letters

- 
[MEDAC advice on pagellus bogaraveo in the GSAs 1-2-3](#)

- 
[MEDAC contribution- EC Consultation mid term evaluation EMFAF](#)

- 
[MEDAC contribuion on EC Consultation on the allocation on FOs \(art.17\)](#)

- 
[MEDAC contribution EC Consultation of stakeholders on social data in fisheries](#)

- 
[MEDAC advice on demersal fisheries in the Strait of Sicily in view of the GFCM/SAC SRC Central Mediterranean](#)

- 
[MEDAC advice on Marine Recreational Fishery \(MRF\)](#)




# The MEDAC contribution



MEDAC contribution on the current management measures in the Central Mediterranean



MEDAC contribution on the current management measures in the Western Mediterranean



GFCM SRC-EM, May 10 - May 12, Athens, Greece [hybrid]

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MEDAC contribution on the current management measures in the Eastern

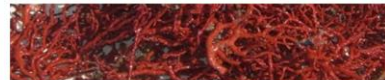
GFCM WG MSE on Adriatic Sea small pelagics, May 29, Split, Croatia [hybrid]



MEDAC advice on Management Strategy Evaluation (WGMSE) on Adriatic small pelagics  
Session 1: preparatory meeting on methods



Medac advice on red coral fishery management



MEDAC ADVICE ON ENERGY TRANSITION

Meeting on the Decarbonization of the fishing industry (WKDECA)

## Key steps for an effective stakeholders involvement:

- Cover all the relevant languages of the area interested by the meeting
- The timing and the agenda of the meeting should be communicated at least 10 days before the meeting
- Be sure that the scientific information/request to the stakeholders is clear and understandable
- Check the attendance and participation of representatives of all relevant organizations and improve the involvement of the absent groups with an interest on the topic.





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For further info  
[segreteria@med-ac.eu](mailto:segreteria@med-ac.eu)



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