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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

Directorate C: Fisheries Policy Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic and Outermost Regions

Unit C3: Scientific Advice and Data Collection

Call MARE/2020/08

Agreement reference: SI2.839444

**Development of the Regional Database for the
Mediterranean & Black Seas**



European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

Final Report

ANNEX III

**Steering Committee Meeting for the Mediterranean &
Black Sea
Regional DataBase (Med&BS RDB SC)**

Final Report Number: 1

Covered period: from 01/01/2021 to 28/02/2023

3rd Med&BS RDB-SC meeting on 22 March 2021

I. Executive summary

The 3rd Steering Committee for the Mediterranean and Black Sea Regional Database (SC Med&BS-RDB) was held on 22 March 2021 as an online meeting.

Prior to the meeting the Member States confirmed and updated members of the Steering Committee for the Regional Database (RDB SC) following the RCG MED & BS 2020 Recommendation 12. The updated list of SC members appointed by Member States is provided in [APPENDIX 3](#) of this report.

The 3rd SC Med&BS-RDB was attended by 27 participants from 10 Med&BS Member States, DG MARE and GFCM. All appointed SC members from all Med&BS MS participated (17 in total) as well as three representatives from the European Commission (DG MARE, Unit C3) and two GFCM representatives. Five National Correspondents participated in the meeting including both RCG Med&BS 2021 chairs.

The SC agreed that another meeting before the RCG Med&BS annual meeting in 2021 is needed to follow-up on the conclusions of the 3rd Med&BS RDB-SC meeting on 22 March 2021 and to discuss technical aspects concerning the development of the RDB. The SC agreed on the dates for the 4th Med&BS RDB-SC meeting from 12-13 July 2021.

II. Minutes from the 3rd MED&BS RDB-SC meeting on 22 March 2021

Chairs of the RCG Med&BS 2021, Ms Ivana Vukov and Mr Jurgen Mifsud, opened the meeting. After the introduction of participants, the revised agenda was adopted without amendments ([APPENDIX 1.1](#)).

– ***Current state - review of the progress towards setting up the RDB***

The Chairman of the Steering Committee, Mr Stefanos Kavadas, presented progress since the meeting held in 2012.

Mr Paolo Carpentieri, who chaired the 1st SC meeting held in 2012, explained that the main obstacle in development of the regional database in the period since 2012 was mainly related to the commitment of the countries to submit the data.

Ms Venetia Kostopoulou explained that during that period DG MARE launched a pilot project (MARE/2015/04). The project was entrusted to the consortium formed by Sogeti (leader), DevStat with Framian, Cofad and CLS for the implementation of a “Study on Availability and Dissemination of DCF (Data Collection Framework) Data”. The objective of the study was to analyse and demonstrate the feasibility of the permanent establishment of the FishHub through a prototype, with the aim to scale up in the future for the entire DCF system. The FishHub was to be a layer dedicated to the dissemination of fishery statistics connecting supra-national databases and offering access to various end-users to different aggregation levels of the data. It was expected to play a complementary role to existing systems and to allow improving the quality of the data, disseminating more widely the DCF data, combining different kinds of data and reducing administrative burden on the Member States.

The project was terminated before it was finalized, and Ms Kostopoulou added that there was indeed some reluctance from MS on sharing data of lower aggregation levels. However, the project FishHub highlighted the difficulties in sharing data and how to proceed. Outcomes of FishHub are not publicly available and there was

no final report, because the project was terminated before its finalization. Ms Kostopoulou agreed to share with the SC chair part of project documentation which could be useful for the RDB SC.

In 2020, DG MARE launched the regional grants (MARE/2020/08), and one of the Annexes is dedicated to the development of a regional database for the Med & BS. In addition, Ms Kostopoulou added that, in 2017, the regional grant (MARE/2016/22) 'STREAM' was requested to carry out an analysis in relation to the future regional database for the Med&BS region.

Ms Charis Charilaou added that there were two projects going on, and further discussion on the regional database depended on outputs of these projects.

Mr Antonello Sala explained that on the level of Italy there are some doubts regarding the regional database. Mr Sala added that two databases are already operational at the regional level, i.e. database managed by the JRC and the GFCM database. Other countries are also sceptical on the new regional database because there are several existing repositories and countries cannot discern which database will in the future be the main database.

The Chairman added that according to the MARE/2020/08 regional grant objectives, it is important to ensure comparability of data storage systems already in place. Since the ICES regional database is already established, the new Med&BS database has to follow its structure. The Chairman added that he considers that a centralized database is needed to support not only the RCG needs, but it is very important for the scientific use. The EU decided to fund the regional database and the MARE/2020/08 project Med&BS RDBFIS objective is to develop and implement a fully functional system to support the needs of the RCG and the MS.

Mr Alessandro Ligas reiterated what Ms Kostopoulou explained, that during the STREAM project some preliminary analysis was performed regarding the possible hosting of a regional database. Mr Ligas added that he understands the concern about the possible additional burden to MS in having an additional database and stressed that this is the main challenge that needs to be tackled. Additional information and feedback is needed for MS, to help them understand that the regional database is an added value.

Ms Kostopoulou agreed and added that it is important to continue development of the database which is needed for the MS and RCG for the implementation of regional sampling plans. In addition, according to the DCF Recast (Regulation (EU) No 2017/1004), there is a clear legal obligation to develop compatible storage systems, and RCGs are entrusted to develop the regional sampling plans, whereas the new RDB will be the vehicle to realize this.

– ***Presentation of the MARE 2020/08 grant - Development of the regional database for the Mediterranean and Black Sea (Med&BS RDBFIS)***

The Chairman provided information on ongoing regional projects launched under the MARE/2020/08 regional grant, including STREAMLINE, FISHN'CO, SECWEB and Med&BS RDBFIS. The Chairman provided more information on specific objectives of the Med&BS RDBFIS regional grant aimed at developing the regional database for the Med&BS.

The consortium is comprised of six partners from three EU MS, and the project is organized into six inter-correlated work packages and into five tasks with a short implementation period of 24 months.

The project outputs include 15 deliverables and 30 milestones. The Chairman added that through milestones it will be easier for the SC to monitor the implementation of the project.

Following EC recommendation, the implementation platform used for the development of the RDBFIS will be based on open source packages.

Ms Charis Charilaou asked on the inclusion of data for large pelagic species (according to ICCAT provisions). The Chairman explained that it is possible to include information for the large pelagic species, however this depends on the decision of RCG LP. This issue needs to be further addressed.

Ms Charilaou further asked on the inclusion of VMS data since this issue was already discussed in the RDB Med&BS SC meeting in Rome in 2019. The Chairman explained that VMS data on national level submitted to

the RDBFIS will only be accessible to MS. The purpose of RDBFIS in this regard is to provide a tool to analyse VMS data, which will be protected and characterized as confidential. There will be no obligation for MS to upload or keep the data in the system after the outputs are produced. The main aim is to support aggregation of data for the FDI data call as well provide a tool to carry out additional analysis on MS level.

Regarding sampling schemes, Ms Charilaou added that it may be difficult to identify different hierarchies concerning sampling schemes and asked if MS will be contacted before developing the samplings scheme in the database. The Chairman replied that this information will be collected from MS during the course of the project. RDBFIS will also have to be compatible with the RDB-ES which is in use in the ICES area. Since sampling schemes in the ICES area are different from the sampling schemes in the Med&BS, the two systems are not compatible in that regard. Therefore, solutions for the compatibility issues will have to be investigated in order to solve this.

The Chairman explained that the ICES RDB-ES ("Regional Database Estimation System") is a database with an incorporated statistical system to support the analysis (length distribution etc.). Since this system is already well developed and working well, the RDBFIS will utilize the existing RDB-ES structure and integrate additional functionalities needed in the Med&BS region to best support MS needs.

In what concerns the agreement of ICES in sharing the database structure, Ms Kostopoulou clarified that ICES participated in the SC meeting in 2019 and already then expressed their cooperation and availability to share best practices.

Mr Ioannis Thasitis added that Cyprus already has some experience in using RDB-ES. Regarding the RCG LP, during the implementation of the previous regional grant on large pelagics i.e. RECOLAPE project, it was decided to go towards the RDB-ES, pending voting since the last meeting. Mr Thasitis further explained that the structure and hierarchies of RDB-ES is unique. However, the only drawback is the provision of codes for species, gears and areas for different regions, if the coding is correct all the rest of the hierarchies will capture the design of sampling schemes applied in different regions. The Chairman explained that the database structure of the RDB-ES is based on the COST model.

Following presentation of the project, the Chairman presented the website and SharePoint of the Med&BS RDBFIS project, which will soon be shared with the RCG and MS.

– ***Setting up a framework for synergies between SC Med&BS RDB, Med&BS RDBFIS and other MARE 2020/08 grants***

The Chairman presented the proposed framework for communication between ongoing regional grants and SC Med&BS RDB.

SC Med&BS RDB will cooperate with the SC of RDBFIS with the aim to:

- Intermediate the test of the RDBFIS – establish a technical group inside the SC to investigate and discuss on testing;
- Cooperate with STREAMLINE on sampling strategies; and
- Propose future improvements.

The leader of STREAMLINE project, Mr Alessandro Ligas, agreed that cooperation and synergy between the two projects (STREAMLINE and RDBFIS) has to be very strong. The RDBFIS regional grant is providing the container of the data while the STREAMLINE will be working on the contents, so the cooperation between the two projects is fundamental. Feedback from MS and RCG is crucial, since any duplication on work should be avoided and everything has to be focused on MS needs. The objective of the regional grants is to provide support to progress towards the regional approach in data collection so cooperation is fundamental.

Following the same principles, cooperation with the FISHN'CO regional grant, aimed at creating regional sampling plans and regional work plans for other RCGs, it is important to take advantage on what is implemented in the different projects. In addition, SECWEB project will create a link among all the RCGs which is important for the successful work for the regional grants. Continuous communication is needed to avoid duplication of work and to progress towards the expected goals.

Ms Kostopoulou reiterated that regional grants should support the work of the RCGs.

– ***Potential hosts of the Med&BS RDBFIS***

Mr Paolo Carpentieri asked the Chairman to provide clarification on hosting of the RDB, since there was some misunderstanding during the discussion on previous points of the agenda that ICES was already chosen to host the RDBFIS. Mr Carpentieri added that to his understanding there was a common unofficial agreement among the SC members in 2019 that GFCM is the best option to host the RDB as the relevant RFMO. This agreement was preceded by a formal written procedure in which Member States were asked to choose their preferred hosting location (JRC, GFCM or ICES). However, during the RCG Med&BS annual meeting in 2019, the Member States did not confirm the SC decision, pending information on cost and financing options, inclusion of different sets of data, data sharing agreement, governance etc.

The Chairman confirmed that the host is not chosen and explained that the decision is still pending indicating GFCM and JRC as two potential hosts.

In replying to a question raised by the meeting, Mr De Rossi reiterated the availability of GFCM to be formally contacted for possibly hosting the RDB pending technical details and definition of financial implication.

Mr Pedro Torres added that GFCM uses a different system to that of ICES or JRC.

The Chairman explained that the RDBFIS will be developed during the course of the MARE 2020/08 regional grant in a virtual machine, using open-source solutions (packages), and it will be very easy to migrate and customize to any system used by the future RDB host.

Ms Kostopoulou confirmed that at the RCG Med&BS level there was a discussion in 2019, and DG MARE requested MS to express their preferences for the hosting of the RDB. As there was no outcome at RCG level in 2019, the regional grant was launched to start the development of the RDB.

Ms Charilaou added that most MS preferred GFCM as host as the relevant RFMO, instead of JRC, while only Cyprus decided on ICES.

Ms Louis Véron and Mr Michael Chatziefstathiou, SC members as of beginning of 2021, asked if there are any technical differences between the GFCM / JRC and if this can be highlighted for the National Correspondents in advance of the RCG annual meeting to support the decision-making process.

Ms Simona Nicheva added that voting on the preferred host could be done in a written procedure before the annual RCG meeting, as was done previously.

Mr Chatziefstathiou added that Greece prefers voting by National Correspondents during the annual meeting and not the written procedure. In addition, Mr Chatziefstathiou asked the Chairman to present any technical issues on the use of GFCM or JRC databases.

Mr Kavadas explained that a document summarizing the pros and cons of each option already exists however it should be reviewed, taking into consideration new technologies etc., and added that both GFCM and JRC have the potential to fully support the new system.

Mr De Rossi recalled that in order to evaluate the possibility for the GFCM to play the role of service provider of the RDB, documentation is needed to clearly understand the requirements, the development, the hosting, the maintenance as well as the future adjustments of the DB with the subsequent budgetary implication. The availability of GFCM was confirmed to exchange relevant technical details about its databases and information systems management (in line with existing FAO standards) which may be useful for the RDB.

Although the finalization of the regional grant is expected by the end of 2022, the SC agreed that the RCG Med&BS needs to reach a decision on the preferred host of the RDB as soon as possible, to take into account any technical or procedural difficulties, which may occur during the course of RDB development. Discussion and outcomes of the RCG annual meeting depend on the presentation on preliminary outcomes and communication in preparation of the voting on hosting location.

In conclusion, the hosting location of the Med&BS RDBFIS will be co-decided by the Commission, RCG and Member States. Voting on RDB hosting options preferred by MS will be done by National Correspondents

during the RCG annual meeting in September 2021, with the aim to reach a final RCG Med&BS decision. The RCG Med&BS chairs should distribute all relevant documents to support the decision-making progress by the end of July 2021.

– ***GFCM presentation - Update of the main GFCM data calls including the new tasks on the DCRF online platform and the results of application of data quality indicators***

Mr Federico De Rossi, GFCM data compliance officer, provided an overview of the GFCM fisheries data needs principles, the 2021 GFCM data calls, the new DCRF tasks and the recent results of data quality assessment ([APPENDIX 1.3](#)).

GFCM receives data from Mediterranean and Black Sea through different channels: i) in reply to existing GFCM Recommendations (compulsory), ii) through national reports to the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) and the Working Group of the Black Sea (WGBS), iii) through Stock Assessment Forms – SAFs (input data for priority species being compulsory from 2018), iv) through ad-hoc data calls for those information not currently requested by existing GFCM recommendations. GFCM fisheries data needs (more than 70 data calls in 2021) are regularly communicated to concerned CPCs through the GFCM Data submission calendar (a new and advanced version is going to public released on the GFCM website shortly) and the GFCM deadline reminders (emails in English and French) sent to CPCs when a deadline for data submission is approaching. With reference to the data needed for stock assessment purposes in order to maintain the quality of advice, GFCM has moved towards to both use the official data provided by countries through the DCRF online platform on fishing activities (i.e. catch and effort data – number of vessels, number of days at sea, etc.) and the preservation of the independence of experts to decide on scientific data and assumptions used (e.g. biological data on life history traits) at the GFCM working groups on stock assessment (WGSA). Finally, an update on the implementation of fisheries quality indicators [timeliness, completeness, conformity, stability and consistency] to assess the data submitted by CPCs through the DCRF online platform was provided to participants with an overview of the results for the 2019 data, as received by the GFCM Secretariat in 2020.

Mr De Rossi reiterated the availability of GFCM to exchange any relevant technical information that may be useful for the group in defining the future RDB.

The Chairman congratulated the GFCM on progress made concerning both the DCRF online platform and the new interactive online data calendar system and asked on the implementation platform of the GFCM whether it is possible to support LINUX. Mr De Rossi recalled that most GFCM technologies are cloud-based (Microsoft) with the use of R-based package for DCRF data quality and stock assessment data analysis, and invited the Chairman to have relevant IT exchanges with the concerned GFCM staff in order to get further and detailed information.

– ***Long term sustainability of the Med&BS RDBFIS (maintain, improvements (needs for development) after the end of the project, cost-sharing model, cost-sharing model)***

The Chairman presented possible cost sharing models taking into account future RDB development, and added that any improvements and management should be done in a co-decision process, under the responsibility of the RCG and NCs.

The Chairman underlined that the cost sharing model should be done in a co-decision process, under the responsibility of the RCG and NCs.

The Chairman took an example of the agreement with ICES regarding the RDB used by northern RCGs.

Ms Kostopoulou explained that the grant agreement is directed for the ICES RDB and not for the RDB-ES, which is not a recurrent funding obligation for DG MARE. In addition, Ms Kostopoulou added that regarding private funding bodies presented by the Chairman as the last financing option, it raises a question based on the feasibility of actually having this option.

The Chairman added that long-term sustainability of the RDB depends on the cost-sharing agreement among MS.

Ms Blanca Garcia Alvarez added that the SC needs to provide much more information to the NCs on how to deal with the cost and to provide them with all the elements to have a good decision. Ms Garcia Alvarez further explained that the cost sharing agreement among the northern MS is based on the proportional use of the RDB and the EMFF allocation. However, in the end this agreement was not necessary.

Ms Charis Charilaou added that a clear distinction is needed to understand what possibilities are not feasible (for example private funding options).

Mr De Rossi explained that in order to assess the costs, the SC should consider the type of technology used and pros and cons of different technologies, security systems etc. Cost-benefit analysis is needed to evaluate different scenarios which include development, hosting and maintenance of the DB.

– ***Governance model for the Med&BS RDBFIS***

The Chairman proposed that the governance function of the Med&BS RDBFIS in the future is performed by a steering committee.

The proposed composition of the steering committee is as follows:

- Up to two representatives of the RCG Med&BS;
- One representative from each Med&BS Member State;
- Representatives from the European Commission;
- Chair invited guests; and
- Observers.

In addition, the Chairman explained that in case RCG LP decided to join in the RDBFIS, up to two representatives of RCG LP maybe appointed in the steering committee.

Ms Simona Nicheva asked on the procedure to upload national data in the RDBFIS. The Chairman explained that the system will support the uploading procedure for each country.

Ms Kostopoulou added on what concerns the COM's access rights, legal obligations are all laid out in the DCF Regulation. Regarding potential use of RDBFIS by STECF and DG MARE, the structure and outputs of the database should follow the legal framework and the data call requirements. The COM will have to discern on how the database is developed followed by a discussion on specific access rights and how it can best be used.

The Chairman explained that the SC would have to discuss on this in the next meetings, since one of the main goals of the application is to support the needs of MS and to support the COM.

Ms Blanca Garcia Alvarez explained the current system of sharing data among the MS that are using the ICES RDB-ES. There is an agreement among all of them and ICES on data access rights which is signed at the beginning of each year.

The Chairman further explained that WP3 of the RDBFIS regional grant is aimed at developing a governance model for RDBFIS.

– ***Establish and agree on procedures for the future work of the SC, road-map***

The Chairman proposed procedures in relation to ongoing activities of the MARE/2020/08 regional grants.

Ms Kostopoulou added that the RCG Med&BS would benefit in having a scheme and timeline of RDBFIS deliverables with milestones clearly highlighted for which RCG Med&BS contribution and review is needed. In the next meeting it would be beneficial to have a timeline of the regional grant with the main outcomes which are relevant for discussion at the RCG level. This would enable the RCG to follow the grant and how the outcomes will be preliminary produced which would be a benefit in the RCG discussions. Ms Ivana Vukov, the RCG Med&BS chair asked Mr Kavadas if it will be possible to create the scheme before the RCG Med&BS annual meeting and Mr Kavadas agreed.

The Chairman replied that it is very important for the consortium to be sure that they will have the support of all Med&BS Member States as well as the RCG and the Steering Committee of the RDB. Cooperation and collaboration is needed from all the experts from DG MARE, ICES and RCG to produce the best result.

– ***Topics and dates for next meeting in 2021***

The SC agreed that another meeting before the RCG Med&BS annual meeting is needed to follow-up on the conclusions of the 3rd Med&BS RDB-SC meeting and to discuss technical aspects concerning the development of the RDB.

The SC agreed on the dates for the 4th Med&BS RDB-SC meeting from 12-13 July 2021. Mr Stefanos Kavadas agreed to continue chairing the SC during the course of 2021.

Regarding chairing from 2022, Mr Kavadas expressed his reluctance to continue chairing and added that the SC may need to appoint a new chair due to potential conflict of interest with the MARE/2020/08 project in which he is participating. The SC agreed that there is a need to clearly differentiate MARE/2020/08 project activities and activities carried out under the umbrella of the RCG Med&BS. Ms Kostopoulou added that in case this is achieved there is no conflict of interest.

The SC agreed on the following topics for the 4th Med&BS RDB-SC meeting:

- Update document on hosting location options (from 2019)
- Discuss cost-sharing options for the RDB after 2022
- Data policy, data confidentiality, data ownership and access rights issues
- Med&BS RDBFIS and ICES RDB-ES compatibility issues (input from ICES is needed)
- Data aggregation levels and data submission issues
- Inclusion of data for large pelagic species in the regional database (participation from RCG-LP co-chairs is needed)
- Additional RDB services covering bycatch, PETS, recreational fishery and alien species data
- Establishment of technical group
- New RDB SC chair(s) from 2022

RCG Med&BS chairs should invite JRC, ICES, GFCM, DG MARE, RCG-LP chairs, SC members and NCs to participate in the 4th Med&BS RDB-SC meeting.

– ***Summarize the recommendations of the meeting and adoption of the main conclusions***

The SC agreed on the following recommendations/outputs:

- Create a timeline for project outputs (for next SC meeting or annual RCG meeting)
- Final decision on hosting location by RCG Med&BS in annual meeting in September 2021. Documents should be distributed to NCs by RCG Med&BS chairs by the end July 2021.
- Discuss in RCG Med&BS on RDB cost sharing options for implementation from 2023 needed for maintenance and hosting (share document provided by DG MARE)
- Establish a technical group inside the Med&BS RDB SC to communicate with the regional project Med&BS RDBFIS regarding technical aspects of RDB development
- Establish a SC for the Med&BS RDBFIS

APPENDIX 1.1 – Agenda - 22 March 2021



Regional Coordination Group
Mediterranean and Black Sea

Steering Committee for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional Database (Med&BS RDB)

[Virtual meeting](#)

22 March 2021 from 10:00 – 16:30 CET

Agenda

Morning session (10:00 – 12:30 CET)

- Opening of the meeting, adoption of the agenda
- Current state - review of the progress towards setting up the RDB
- Presentation of the MARE 2020/08 grant - Development of the regional database for the Mediterranean and Black Seas (Med&BS RDBFIS)
- Setting up a framework for synergies between SC Med&BS RDB, Med&BS RDBFIS and other MARE 2020/08 grants

Afternoon session (13:30 – 16:30 CET)

- Potential hosts of the Med&BS RDBFIS
- GFCM presentation - Update of the main GFCM data calls including the new tasks on the DCRF online platform and the results of application of data quality indicators
- Long term sustainability of the Med&BS RDBFIS (maintain, improvements (needs for development) after the end of the project, cost-sharing model, cost-sharing model)
- Governance model for the Med&BS RDBFIS
- Establish and agree on procedures for the future work of the SC, road-map
- Topics and dates for next meeting in 2021
- Summarize the recommendations of the meeting and adoption of the main conclusions

APPENDIX 1.2 – Participants list - 22 March 2021

Country	Participant	Email	Role
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APPENDIX 2.1 – Agenda - 12-13 July 2021



4th Steering Committee Meeting for the Med&BS Regional Database (SC Med&BS RDB)

[Virtual meeting](#)

12-13 July 2021 from 9:30 h - 16:00 h CET

Draft Agenda

Monday, 12 July 2021

9:30h – 16:00 h (CET)

- Opening of the meeting, adoption of the agenda
- Information on current activities carried out under MARE 2020/08 RDBFIS project
- RCG LP and Med&BS RDBFIS cooperation
- Inclusion of data for large pelagic species in the regional database
- Update document on hosting location options (from 2019)
- Data policy, data confidentiality, data ownership and access rights issues
- Med&BS RDBFIS and ICES RDB-ES compatibility issues

Tuesday, 13 July 2021

9:30 h – 16:00 h (CET)

- Data aggregation levels and data submission issues
- Additional RDB services covering surveys, bycatch, PETS, recreational fishery and alien species data
- Establishment of technical group
- Discuss cost-sharing options for the RDB after 2022
- New RDB SC chair(s) from 2022
- Summarize the recommendations of the meeting and adoption of the main conclusions

APPENDIX 2.1 – Participants list – 12-13 July 2021

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EC, DG MARE, Unit C3	Blanca GARCIA ALVAREZ	Blanca.GARCIA-ALVAREZ@ec.europa.eu	DG MARE representative
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Malta	Miriam GAMBIN	miriam.gambin@gov.mt	Expert
Romania	Alexandru GHEORGHE	alexandru.gheorghe@anpa.ro	SC member
Romania	Constantin STROIE	constantin.stroie@anpa.ro	NC
Slovenia	Tim BERGINC	tim.berginc@gov.si	SC member, NC
Spain	María GONZÁLEZ	maria.gonzalez@ieo.es	SC member
Spain	Pedro TORRES	pedro.torres@ieo.es	SC member

NC – National Correspondent

* RCG Med&BS 2021 co-chairs

III. Minutes from the 4th MED&BS RDB-SC meeting on 12-13 July 2021

APPENDIX 3 – Updated list of RDB MED&BS SC members

Updated information on Steering Committee members appointed by Member States is presented in the table below.

Member State	Name and SURNAME	E-mail
Bulgaria	Kolyo ZHELEV	kolyo.zhelev@iara.government.bg
Bulgaria	Simona NICHEVA	simona.nicheva@iara.government.bg
Croatia	Dalibor JELAVIĆ	jelavic@izor.hr
Croatia	Ivana VUKOV	ivana.vukov@mps.hr
Cyprus	Charis CHARILAOU	ccharilaou@dfmr.moa.gov.cy
Cyprus	Ioannis THASITIS	IThasitis@dfmr.moa.gov.cy
France	Louise VÉRON	louise.veron@agriculture.gouv.fr
France	Norbert BILLET	norbert.billet@ifremer.fr
Greece	Antonios PAPOUTSIS	a.papoutsis@inale.gr
Greece	Stefanos KAVADAS	stefanos@hcmr.gr
Italy	Alessandro LIGAS	ligas@cibm.it
Italy	Antonello SALA	antonello.sala@cnr.it
Malta	Jurgen MIFSUD	jurgen.a.mifsud@gov.mt
Romania	Alexandru GHEORGHE	alexandru.gheorghe@anpa.ro
Slovenia	Tim BERGINC	tim.berginc@gov.si
Spain	María GONZÁLEZ	maria.gonzalez@ieo.es
Spain	Pedro TORRES	pedro.torres@ieo.es

Steering Committee Meeting for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional DataBase (Med&BS RDB SC)

RDB SC – RDBFIS Extra-ordinary meeting
4th February 2022, 09.00-13.00 CET
(Online, Microsoft Teams platform)

Minutes

The meeting was opened by Alessandro Ligas, Chair of the Steering Committee Meeting for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional DataBase (Med&BS RDB SC), who welcomed the participants, and stressed the importance of the strict cooperation between the RDBFIS regional grant, the Med&BS RDB SC, and the RCG Med&BS. He also welcomed the participation and support of the RCGs Secretariat, DG MARE and the GFCM Secretariat. He then presented the agenda of the meeting that was endorsed by the group.

Susana Rivero (RCGs Secretariat) provided the participants with the logistic information for the meeting and briefly presented and introduced the RCGs Secretariat and the work performed under the SECWEB regional grant, including the RCGs website (<https://www.fisheries-rcg.eu/>).

Stefanos Kavadas, RDBFIS coordinator, presented the main outcomes achieved during the first year of implementation of the project. Since the beginning of the project, cooperation and communication with RCG Med&BS, MSs, Med&BS RDB SC, ICES/RDBES, end users and other initiatives on the creation of RDBFIS were initiated. Moreover, a proactive cooperation with the other MARE/2020/08 grants (STREAMLINE, FISHN'CO and SECWEB) was established. A considerable effort was exerted to finalize the discussions with the Med&BS MSs in order to precisely collect the required information about the existing infrastructure used to support the DCF, the statistical system for the data analysis and the sampling scheme. Discussions related to the compatibility issues between RDBFIS and ICES RDBES, as well as the possibility to integrate part of the RDBES into RDBFIS, took place with ICES experts, RCG Med&BS, MSs and Med&BS RDB SC.

Mr Kavadas informed that a core team from RDBFIS has been following the works of ICES WK RDBES-EST. Even if the RDBES can be considered as a “mature” system, the algorithms have still to be finalized, tested and approved by ICES. The RDBES tables contain too much information and we must choose (and propose) what is relevant to Med&BS.

Two meetings were held with the Med&BS RDB SC in March and July 2021. Important issues related to governance, data policy, data access, RDBFIS hosting and maintenance, compatibility with RDBES, type of data to be included in the RDB, and data submission (primary and aggregated) were discussed.

Mr Kavadas informed that the Interim Report was submitted in January to DG MARE; the deliverables of WP1, WP2 and WP3 are attached to the Interim Report.

WP1 (Deliverable 1.1-Compilation of a list of stakeholders and sources used) has analysed the aspects related to the data quality of the DCF, in relation to the National Work Plans and the Data Calls. The data checking activity of STECF has been reviewed to highlight the need

of implementing appropriate quality checks for several data domains. An inventory is provided, considering the main existing tools in support of DCF carried out in the previous grants (e.g. MARE 2014/19 and STREAM projects) or open-source/free tools that can be used with little configuration/upgrade.

The activities of WP2 are related to the identification of the RDB features needed to answer the data submission and reporting obligations, and are tackling also the aspects related to governance and data formats for RDBFIS aimed at facilitating the work of both RCGs and EU MSs. The detailed data and the Med&BS aggregated data can be in most cases converted using existing tools (e.g., STREAM tools), accordingly modified for the specific needs of the RDBFIS. On the other hand, RDBFIS needs to take into account the novel developments of RDBES, and specifically its philosophy, that focuses on the tracking of the sampling design followed to collect the data. Furthermore, WP2 concentrated its effort in the collation of information on the available tools for quality check to be incorporated in the RDBFIS. Some other initiatives need to be taken into account, such as the tools developed for STECF EWG 21-02, and for survey data (i.e., RoME). Finally, WP2 has set a series of rules concerning Governance and Data Policy

The WP3 aimed at defining the specifications for the RDB and its final requirements taking into account the system and governance/data policy, and the results from WP1 and WP2. Requirements resulting from the activity of WP1 and WP2 have led then to the Deliverable D3.1 – “Specifications for the RDB and final requirements including a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) definition”. The deliverable contains the definitions of the most relevant use cases, the Med&BS RDB Steering Committee membership and guidelines, and the Regional Database data policy. It is worth noticing that the documents already triggered the discussions and reactions from some EU MSs.

The current RDBFIS structure contains 232 tables; 86 main tables and 146 parametric tables (to ensure referential integrity in the datasets). Structures to support VMS, MCDA, alien species and recreational fisheries are ready. Database expansion work will continue and be completed on schedule by March 2022.

RDBFIS supports detailed and aggregated data formats, as well as survey data format. The detailed data have to be stored according to the RCG formats for the biological sampling data (CS). The aggregated data formats supported by the database are the RCG landing table (CL), as well as all the tables specifically required by the end-users, through relevant datacalls: Med&BS, FDI, GFCM, Annual Economic Report of EU Fleet. These represent the minimum set of formats currently utilized within DCF and by end-users; the detailed data and the MED&BS aggregated data can be in most cases converted using existing tools (e. g. STREAM tools), modified and updated for the specific needs of RDBFIS.

Mr Ligas presented the points to be tackled during the plenary discussion, informing the group that each point will be briefly introduced via a short presentation by the RDBFIS experts according to the following scheme:

1. Challenges of the RDBFIS (centralize database for Med&BS, common quality checks, common statistical estimations, etc.) – S. Kavadas
2. Quality checks implemented in RDBFIS: identification of specific needs – I. Bitetto/W. Zupa
3. How the work of RCGs will be supported by the RDBFIS, past regional grants, STREAMLINE – A. Ligas

4. How the work of MSs will be facilitated by the RDBFIS by reducing the burden of multiple data submissions (for data calls) under different formats – M.T. Spedicato
5. How the MSs should be involved in the RDBFIS development plan – S. Kavadas
6. National Databases and RDBFIS – S. Kavadas
7. Statistical estimates supported by the RDBFIS – I. Bitetto/W. Zupa
8. RDBFIS & RDBES: current status, which RDBES algorithms could be incorporated into RDBFIS, RDBFIS flexibility to include parts of the RDBES (completed and approved by ICES) in the future – I. Bitetto/W. Zupa
9. Agreeing on the Med&BS RDB SC guidelines and data policy for RDBFIS – P. Carrara

Mr Kavadas briefly introduced Points 1, 5 and 6.

The RDB for Med&BS is considered as an important tool to:

- enable regional overviews of fishing activities;
- optimize data collection;
- facilitate task/cost-sharing and sampling at the regional level;
- increase harmonization and transparency;
- create a common estimation system;
- enhance data quality;
- increase the use of DCF data;
- facilitate the fulfillment by EU MSs of data collection submission and reporting obligations.

MSs should be involved in the RDBFIS development plan:

- by providing detailed information to adopt/use specific RDBES hierarchy (ies) (as done already by Cyprus) and identifying which hierarchies are relevant for their needs;
- by providing primary and aggregated data for testing the RDBFIS;
- by testing the RDBFIS (running the application with own data) and sending relevant report;
- by providing detailed information for specific needs (if any).

RDBFIS will be an important tool at regional level that is expected to contribute significantly to the efficient use and share of data in the Med&BS, and will make the Med&BS MSs more competitive. However, RDBFIS will not replace national databases. National databases contain additional information that will not be included in the RDBFIS. National databases shall be informed of any change or additional feature that will be integrated in the RDBFIS.

Charis Charilaou informed that a workshop on fish stomach content sampling and analysis was organized recently by the STREAMLINE grant. She then asked whether the data on fish stomach contents will be included in the RDBFIS database.

Mr Kavadas replied that it will be possible. It will also be possible to include algorithms for the calculation of relevant indices and statistics, if needed. Isabella Bitetto reiterated that a discussion is in place with MSs aimed at identifying the most important hierarchies for Med&BS data. It is crucial that MSs provide RDBFIS Team with a list of priority hierarchies

relevant for their national work plans and sampling designs. Ms Charilaou informed that Cyprus already performed this exercise in cooperation with the RDBFIS Team.

Ivana Vukov asked whether it would be possible for the RDBFIS Team to circulate the structure of the RDBFIS among the EU MSs in order to allow national IT and scientific experts to analyze and understand the RDBFIS structure, with the aim of identifying the relevant hierarchies.

Isabella Bitetto provided a brief introduction regarding Point 2. She informed that the development of an R package is in progress. This new *RDBqc* package will contain the *a priori* and *a posteriori* quality checks developed under the STREAM grant. In addition, the features developed by JRC for the STECF EWG 21-02 will be incorporated. A new version of RoME routine, specifically designed to be embedded in the RDBFIS, for the quality check of MEDITS data is also in development. A cooperation with JRC has been established regarding the FDI data.

Venetia Kostopoulou welcomed the inclusion of quality check tools developed under the previous grants and JRC/STECF. She pointed out that those are very technical aspects, therefore proposed to include JRC and STECF in the consultation process. She also asked information about the procedures and timeline for providing feedback and comments to the RDBFIS Team.

Ms Bitetto explained that the plan is to complete the R package by the end of March 2022. Then, the feedback of MSs and end-users will be sought with the aim of finalizing the whole process by June 2022.

Federico De Rossi congratulated the RDBFIS Team for the significant progresses towards the development of the regional database for the Med&BS and welcomed the release of quality checks based on R functions designed for the GFCM DCRF tasks on catches and biological information.

Ms Bitetto provided a brief presentation for Point 4 on behalf of Maria Teresa Spedicato, who could not attend the meeting. Ms Bitetto informed that WP1 of the RDBFIS grant performed a mapping of the current situation in terms of data calls and commitments linked to the data collection. Linking Point 4 and Point 7, Ms Bitetto informed that another R package, *RDBprocessing*, is in development. The RDB processing package will allow converting data into different formats as required by the different data calls. The routines are those developed under the STREAM grant, upgraded to take into considerations the new data calls specifications.

Regarding Point 8, Ms Bitetto explained that the RDBFIS is taking into account the novel developments of the ICES RDBES, and specifically its philosophy, that focuses on the tracking of the sampling design followed to collect the data. The RDBES tables, responding to 13 different sampling designs (hierarchies), were implemented in the RDBFIS. Communication

with RDBES-EST working group has been established at the meetings held online on the 25th November, 15th December 2021, and 3rd February 2022.

RDBFIS structure flexibility will allow including parts of the RDBES (once completed and approved by ICES) in the future, thanks to the possibility to incorporate R functions/packages.

Considering that the RDBES tables have been already implemented in RDBFIS, the acquiring of RDBES algorithms into RDBFIS are expected to be feasible. The timing of this process will depend on the state of completeness of RDBES algorithms for the hierarchies identified as relevant for the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

Ms Charilaou asked whether effort data will be stored in the new RDB Med&BS, since effort data are required under the FDI data call. In addition, she asked about the possibility of storing the biological data in two separate tables (one for length data, one for data on biology, such as maturity, age, etc.) also to use the new *RDBqc* package, as it was done under the call launched by STREAMLINE in June-July 2021.

Ms Bitetto confirmed this possibility, and explained that additional functions will be implemented in *RDBqc* to allow the combination of the two tables.

Ms Vukov asked for the storing of data on the bycatch of vulnerable species. She reiterated the RCG MED & BS 2021 Recommendation 8 on the Agreement on methodology for data collection on incidental catch of vulnerable species, where MSs agreed to apply the FAO methodology "Monitoring incidental catch of vulnerable species in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: methodology for data collection" starting from 2022. The methodology describes minimum requirements for data collection as well estimation of bycatch rates and number of incidentally caught individuals. It would be also important to liaise with GFCM for possible procedures of analysis and raising of the data.

Mr De Rossi informed about the GFCM DCRF annual data call on incidental catch of vulnerable species and recalled the "Bycatch – discards and incidental catch of vulnerable species" chapter of The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries (SoMFi), the biennial flagship publication prepared by the GFCM Secretariat based on the data regularly submitted by GFCM member countries.

Ms Bitetto informed that the RDBFIS Team will ask to RDBES group if they have already developed some relevant indicators for by-catch (e-g- ratio), in order to explore how these functions could be incorporated in RDBFIS.

Mr Kavadas stressed the importance of receiving the feedback from MSs about the type of data and hierarchies as soon as possible, in order to finalize the structure of the RDBFIS by March 2022.

Mr Ligas provided a brief overview on the four regional grants funded under the EU Call for Proposals MARE/2020/08, as well as the previous regional grants, and their role played in supporting the work of the RCG Med&BS.

Regarding Point 9, Paola Carrara presented the documents produced under the RDBFIS grant Data policy for the Regional Database and Fishery Information System for the Mediterranean and Black Sea, and Proposal for guidelines in the Med&BS RDB SC. While the membership scheme was agreed already by MSs, the guidelines have been revised by some MSs only. Also the data policy, which defines rules and principles applied to data submitted, stored, and processed through the RDBFIS.

The group agreed on the timeline for revising the documents produced by RDBFIS regarding the guidelines for the functioning of the Med&BS RDB SC and the data policy for the RDB. The documents will be sent to the RCG Med&BS chairs and the Med&BS RDB SC chair no later than Friday 11th February. The documents will be then circulated among all the NCs asking for providing their feedback by the end of May 2022. The RCG chairs, the Med&BS RDB SC chair, and the RDBFIS staff will then cooperate to update the documents following NCs comments and suggestions, and present the finalized versions during the annual RCG meeting in September 2022 for the final approval.

Louise Veron, France NC, requested whether any update was available regarding the hosting of the regional database and the cost sharing.

Ms Kostopoulou confirmed that no further update is available compared to the previous meetings of the Med&BS RDB SC, and informed that JRC is not to be considered as an option any more. DG MARE is exploring internally additional options for hosting and will notify MSs and the RCG Med&BS in due time.

Mr De Rossi reiterated that GFCM is following and attending the meetings and activities of the Med&BS RDB SC with interest, and confirmed the availability of the GFCM Secretariat to be formally contacted for evaluating the possibility of hosting the Med&BS RDB.

Mr Ligas thanked all the participants for their proactive support, and informed that the draft minutes of the meeting will be circulated by Friday 11th February.

The meeting closed at 13.00.

List of participants

Name and Surname	Affiliation
Alessandro Ligas	Med&BS RDB SC chair, Italy
Susana Rivero	RCGs Secretariat
Stefanos Kavadas	RDBFIS coordinator, Greece
Isabella Bitetto	RDBFIS
Walter Zupa	RDBFIS
Paola Carrara	RDBFIS
Martina Zilioli	RDBFIS
Silvia Angelini	RDBFIS
Jurgen Mifsud	RCG Med&BS chair, Malta
Hazel Farrugia	Malta

Simona Nicheva	Bulgaria
Kolyo Zhelev	Bulgaria
Ivana Vukov	Croatia
Dalibor Jelavic	Croatia
Charis Charilaou	Cyprus
Ioannis Thasitis	Cyprus
Louise Veron	France
Norbert Billet	France
Angeliki Adamidou	Greece
Antonios Papoutsis	Greece
Lazaros Tsiridis	Greece
Livia Menziani	Italy
Alexandru Gheorghe	Romania
María Gonzalez	Spain
Pedro Torres	Spain
Tim Berginc	Slovenia
Ziga Sanda	Slovenia
Venetia Kostopoulou	DG MARE
Federico De Rossi	GFCM

Steering Committee Meeting for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional Database (Med&BS RDB SC)

RDB SC meeting
2nd December 2022, 09.30-12.00 CET
(Online, Microsoft Teams platform)

Minutes

The meeting was opened by Alessandro Ligas, Chair of the Steering Committee Meeting for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional Database (Med&BS RDB SC), who welcomed the participants, and stressed the importance of the strict cooperation between the RDBFIS regional grant, the Med&BS RDB SC, and the RCG Med&BS. He also welcomed the participation of DG MARE and GFCM, as well as Tarek Hattab (IFREMER), Chair of the MEDIAS Steering Committee. He then presented the agenda of the meeting that was endorsed by the group.

Stefanos Kavadas, RDBFIS coordinator, presented the main outcomes achieved during the implementation of the project. Since the beginning of the project, cooperation and communication with RCG Med&BS, MSs, Med&BS RDB SC, ICES/RDBES, end users and other initiatives on the creation of RDBFIS were initiated. Moreover, a proactive cooperation with the other MARE/2020/08 grants (STREAMLINE, FISHN'CO and SECWEB) was established. A considerable effort was exerted to finalize the discussions with the Med&BS MSs. Mr Kavadas informed that a 2-months extension of the project deadlines has been granted by DG MARE.

Venetia Kostopoulou, DG MARE, thanked Mr Kavadas for the presentation, and highlighted the proactive cooperation with the RDBFIS consortium during the whole implementation of the grant. She then informed that a 2-year continuation of the project will be granted through the Framework contract for services EASME/2020/OP/0021 - (EMFF/2020/3.2.4) "FWC for the provision of scientific advice for the Mediterranean and the Black Seas". The proposal was just received, and the contract will be signed by the end of 2022, for the project to start on the 1st April 2023. This 2-year continuation will allow the temporary hosting of the RDB on the HCMR server, and the further development and testing of the RDB and relevant tools and routines.

Charis Charilaou asked whether the issues with fishing ports codification were solved. Mr Kavadas explained that information on fishing ports in the RDBFIS are taken from the EU Fleet Register and the CIRCABC. This helped solving some of the issues, though some still remain.

Mr Kavadas informed that RDBFIS is drafting a document summarizing all the data issues encountered so far (including survey data, GFCM DCRF data, etc.).

The group agreed that the document will be sent by the RDBFIS Coordinator to the RDB SC, which will facilitate the communication with the RCG, MSs, and GFCM.

Martina Zilioli and Paola Carrara presented the documents produced under the RDBFIS grant Data policy for the Regional Database and Fishery Information System for the Mediterranean and Black Sea, and Proposal for guidelines in the Med&BS RDB SC. While the membership scheme was agreed already by MSs, the guidelines have been revised by some MSs only. Also for the data policy document, which defines rules and principles applied to data submitted, stored, and processed through the RDBFIS, some open questions still remain to be addressed and agreed by all MSs.

The group agreed on a roadmap for streamlining the review of the two documents by all MSs:

- 7th December: RDBFIS WP3 to draft a summary document listing the main open questions and issues to be answered by MSs; the document will be sent to the RDB SC, and then circulated to RCG Chairs and among MSs;
- 23rd December: deadline for receiving the feedback from MSs;
- The documents will be adopted by the RDB SC by the 20th January 2023 via written procedure; a brief online meeting will be arranged in case some points need further discussion before the final approval.

Regarding the inclusion of survey data into the Med&BS RDB, Mr Kavadas informed that the RDBFIS already includes the structure for MEDITS TA, TB, TC, TE (individual data) and TL (marine litter) tables. The database has been populated with test data from Greece (period 1994-2001). In addition to TL, a table for marine litter data in the ICES format has been included too. Contacts with the SOLEMON survey coordinator (Giuseppe Scarcella) have been established. Despite a different stratification scheme, SOLEMON data are already in the MEDITS format (TA, TB, TC), therefore it should be straightforward including them into the RDBFIS. The same consideration applies to the Black Sea surveys (both demersal and pelagic), since they have adopted the MEDITS data format in the last years.

RDBFIS will include only raw data, but routines will be available for the computation of survey abundance and biomass indices. This will be done in cooperation with the MEDITS SC. The issue of public availability of data was discussed and Ms Kostopoulou reminded participants of STECF¹ and COM positive opinion. Still, this should be further explored with MS.

As concerns MEDIAS data, Tarek Hattab, MEDIAS SC chair, welcomed the RDBFIS initiative, and considered it as a good opportunity to finally achieve a common structure and database for MEDIAS data.

¹ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – 67th Plenary Report (PLEN-21-02): point 7.7 Question on the use of data following data checks carried out in EWG 21-02 ([STECF PLEN 21-02.pdf - Plenary Meeting Reports - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#))

The work on MEDIAS data will be tackled in the new framework contract study, and Mr Hattab suggested starting with a test case study using the MEDIAS data from GSA7. It will be important to take decisions regarding which data to include (e.g., both mandatory and non-mandatory data?), and for which species (anchovy and sardine are the target species, but data are collected on other species too).

Ms Kostopoulou confirmed that no further update is available compared to previous meetings regarding the hosting of the Med&BS RDB, although DG MARE is exploring internally additional options. The 2-year temporary hosting of the Med&BS RDB under the framework of the new specific contract will allow further exploring hosting solutions. Ms Kostopoulou noted that both MS and the RCG Med & BS will be duly informed of any updates and will be part of any decisions taken.

Mr De Rossi confirmed the availability of the GFCM Secretariat to be formally contacted for evaluating the possibility of hosting the Med&BS RDB. Several aspects have to be taken into account before a final decision can be taken: funding, technical aspects, accessing and security.

The future role of the RDB SC was discussed and it was agreed that the SC will:

- provide support to RDBFIS and new framework contract study;
- continue cooperating with the main stakeholders (GFCM, COM).

Under AOB, Mr. Stefanos Kavadas proposed to have some parts of RDBFIS, such as the fishing fleet, age length key by species and length weight relationships, open, as this is the case in RDBES. This can be discussed at the next SC/RCG Med & BS meeting.

Mr Ligas thanked all the participants for their proactive support, and informed that the draft minutes of the meeting will be circulated among the participant for their consideration and review.

The meeting closed at 12.00.

List of participants

Name and Surname	Affiliation
Alessandro Ligas	Med&BS RDB SC chair, Italy
Stefanos Kavadas	RDBFIS coordinator, Greece
Paola Carrara	RDBFIS
Martina Zilioli	RDBFIS
Simona Nicheva	Bulgaria
Ivana Vukov	Croatia
Dalibor Jelavic	Croatia
Charis Charilaou	Cyprus
Norbert Billet	France
Antonios Papoutsis	Greece
Alexandru Gheorghe	Romania
María Gonzalez	Spain
Pedro Torres	Spain
Tim Berginc	Slovenia

Tarek Hattab	MEDIAS Chair
Beatriz Guijarro	RCG Med&BS co-Chair
Venetia Kostopoulou	DG MARE
Federico De Rossi	GFCM

Agenda

- 09.30 Welcome, introduction to the meeting and adoption of the agenda - A. Ligas (Med&BS RDB SC chair)
- 09.40 Overview on the RDBFIS regional grant: results achieved so far and future steps - S. Kavadas (RDBFIS coordinator)
- 10.10 Q&As
- 10.20 Data policy and SC guidelines documents - P. Carrara and M. Zilioli (RDBFIS)
- 10.40 Q&As
- 10.50 Coffee break
- 11.00 Plenary discussion:
 - Availability of survey data (e.g., MEDITS, MEDIAS, etc.);
 - Future role of the RDB SC;
 - AOB.
- 11.45 Wrap-up and conclusions
- 12.00 Meeting closure

ANNEX 6 – Acronyms

DCF – Data Collection Framework

EMFF – European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

GFCM – General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean

ICES – International Council for the Exploration of the Sea

JRC – Joint Research Centre (of the European Commission)

NC – National Correspondent

MS – EU Member State

RCG – Regional Coordination Group

RDB – Regional database

RDB-ES – Regional Database Estimation System

RDBFIS – Regional Database Fisheries Information System

SC – Steering Committee