

Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/3

on the establishment of a fisheries restricted area in the Bari Canyon in the southern Adriatic Sea (geographical subarea 18)

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

RECALLING that the objective of the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM Agreement) is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of marine living resources in the GFCM area of application;

CONSIDERING that all measures formulated by the GFCM shall be based on the best scientific advice available, taking into account relevant environmental, economic and social factors;

CONSIDERING that the GFCM shall apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks of 4 August 1995 and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

CONSIDERING that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that states “should apply the precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, taking account of the best scientific evidence available” and that “The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures”;

HAVING REGARD to Article 8 b) ii) of the GFCM Agreement aiming to minimize impacts of fishing activities on marine living resources and their ecosystems;

HAVING REGARD to Article 8 b) iv) of the GFCM Agreement aiming “to establish fisheries restricted areas for the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems, including, but not limited to, nursery and spawning areas...”;

RECALLING the GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, in particular its Output 1.3 “Efficient area-based conservation measures, technical and nature-based solutions strengthened to conserve biodiversity and enhance the productivity of marine living resources” that identifies “new fisheries restricted areas and, once established, enhances their efficiency and monitoring in order to manage the significant adverse impacts of fisheries on vulnerable species, ecosystems and essential fish habitats”;

RECALLING the 2017 Malta MedFish4Ever Ministerial Declaration, in particular its paragraph 38;

NOTING the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 14 “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources” and Target 14.5 “By 2020, conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information”;

CONSIDERING that the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC), at its twenty-second session (online, June 2021), welcomed the work done to complement the proposal for a fisheries restricted area (FRA) in the Bari Canyon towards better estimating social and economic costs and expected benefits from the potential implementation of the FRA;

CONSIDERING that the SAC deemed the proposal technically sound and proposed that the Bari Canyon be considered for the establishment of a new FRA in the Adriatic Sea;

ADOPTS, in conformity with Articles 5 b), 8 b) and 13 of the GFCM Agreement, the following recommendation:

PART I

General objective, scope and definitions

General objective and scope

1. This recommendation establishes a FRA in the Bari Canyon area, in the southern Adriatic Sea (geographical subarea 18), with a view to contributing to the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems and essential fish habitats.

2. For the purpose of this recommendation, the FRA established under paragraph 1 shall be divided in Zone A and Zone B and bounded by the lines joining the geographical coordinates defined in Annex 1.

Definitions

3. For the purpose of this recommendation, the following definitions shall apply:

- a) “Fisheries restricted area” or “FRA” means a geographically-defined area in which some specific fishing activities are temporarily banned or restricted in order to improve the exploitation and conservation of demersal stocks.
- b) “Recreational fishing” means non-commercial fishing activities exploiting marine living resources, including leisure, sport, underwater and charter fisheries.
- c) “Designated landing point” means ports, or places close to the shore, designated by the contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPCs) according to Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/1 on a regional scheme on port state measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities in the GFCM area of application, including offshore terminals and other installations for landing, transshipping, packaging, processing, refuelling or resupplying of fishing vessels, where landings, transshipments, packaging and/or processing operations of fishery products are permitted.
- d) “Fishing authorization” means entitlement other than fishing licence and issued by CPCs to engage in fishing activities with specific fishing gear, during a specified period and in a given area or for a given fishery under specific conditions.
- e) “Authorized vessel” means fishing vessel in possession of a specific fishing authorization.
- f) “Fishing day” means any continuous period of 24 hours, or part thereof, during which a vessel is searching for fish, shooting, setting, towing, hauling a fishing gear, taking catch on board, transshipping, retaining on board, processing on board, transferring and landing fish and fishery products.

PART II

Management and monitoring of fishing capacity and fishing effort in the Bari Canyon FRA

Zone A

4. Any professional or recreational fishing activity shall be prohibited in Zone A.

Zone B

5. Fishing activities with towed nets, bottom set nets and recreational fishing shall be prohibited in Zone B (identified as “buffer zone”).
6. Fishing activities with set longlines and traps may be allowed provided that the vessel and/or its master are in possession of a specific authorization and that historical fishing activities in the buffer zone are demonstrated. The CPCs shall establish a register of the fishing vessels authorized to fish in Zone B.

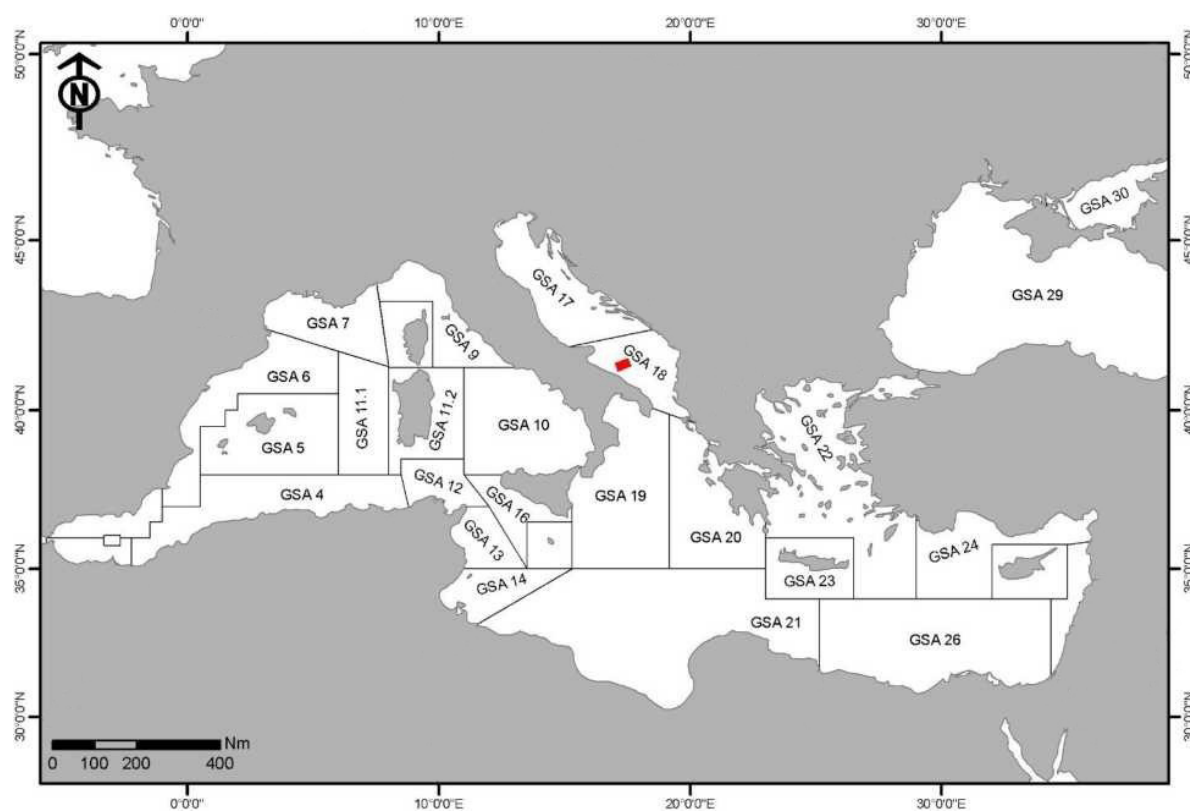
PART III
Control measures

7. The CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 30 April 2022 of the first year of implementation, the list of authorized vessels for 2022 and subsequently, not later than 30 April each year, the list of authorized vessels for the forthcoming year. For each vessel, the list shall contain the information detailed in Annex 2.
8. Authorized fishing vessels shall only land catch of demersal stocks at the CPCs’ designated landing points. To this end, each CPC shall designate landing points in which the landings of demersal stocks from the Bari Canyon FRA is authorized. The list of such landing points shall be communicated to the GFCM Secretariat by 30 April each year starting from 2022.
9. Fishing vessels authorized to fish in Zone B shall be equipped with vessel monitoring systems (VMS) and/or automated identification systems (AIS) in correct working order, and the fishing gear on board or in use shall be duly identified, numbered and marked before starting any fishing operation or navigation in the FRA.
10. Fishing vessels equipped with bottom-set nets, bottom trawls, set longlines and traps without authorization shall be allowed to transit through the FRA only if they follow a direct course at a constant speed of not less than 7 knots and are equipped with VMS and/or AIS active on board.

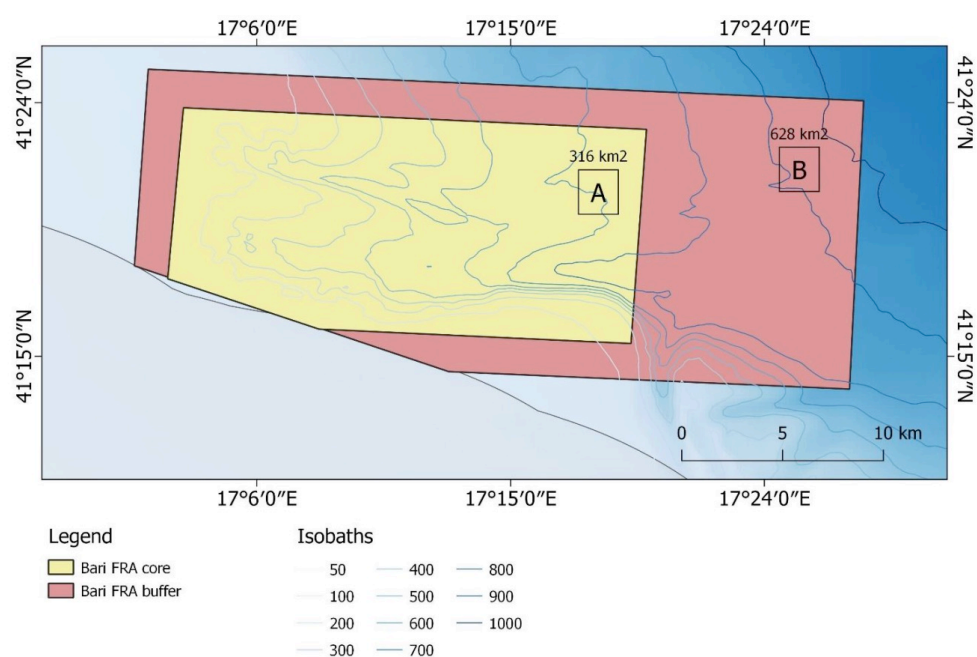
PART IV
Final provisions

11. Contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties shall call the attention of the relevant national and international authorities in order to protect the Bari Canyon FRA from the impacts of any activity that may jeopardize the conservation of the characteristic features of its particular habitats.
12. This recommendation shall be without prejudice to stricter measures adopted by the CPCs for the vessels flying their flag.
13. This recommendation shall apply until 31 December 2026. The SAC and the Compliance Committee shall review its implementation on a yearly basis. Based on the SAC advice, the management measures for the Bari Canyon FRA shall be reviewed in 2026.

Geographical coordinates of the fisheries restricted area in the Bari Canyon (geographical subarea 18)



Map of the Mediterranean Sea and location of the fisheries restricted area in the Bari Canyon
(geographical subarea 18)



Detailed position of the fisheries restricted area in the Bari Canyon (geographical subarea 18)

Position of the core (Zone A) and buffer zones (Zone B) of the fisheries restricted area in the Bari Canyon (geographical subarea 18)

Zone A	
Latitude	Longitude
41° 23' 3" N	17° 19' 49" E
41° 15' 27" N	17° 19' 16" E
41° 15' 58" N	17° 8' 12" E
41° 17' 45" N	17° 2' 50" E
41 °23' 49" N	17° 3' 24" E

Zone B	
Latitude	Longitude
41° 24' 4" N	17° 27' 31" E
41° 13' 50" N	17° 27' 1" E
41° 14' 27" N	17° 12' 48" E
41° 18' 12" N	17° 1' 40" E
41° 25' 11" N	17° 2' 9" E

Annex 2

The list referred to in paragraph 7 shall contain for each vessel the following information:

- vessel name;
- national registration number (code assigned by CPCs);
- vessel registration number (country ISO 3-alpha code + 9 digits, e.g. xxx000000001);
- previous name (if any);
- previous flag (if any);
- previous details of deletion from other registers (if any);
- international radio call sign (if any);
- type of vessel, length overall and gross tonnage;
- name and address of owner(s) and operator(s);
- main gear used to fish in the FRA;
- seasonal period authorized for fishing in the FRA;
- number of fishing days that can be exerted by each vessel; and
- designated port.