

# General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

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## About GFCM

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) is a regional fisheries management organization (RFMO) established under the provisions of Article XIV of the [FAO Constitution](#). The GFCM initially started its activities as a Council in 1952, when the Agreement for its establishment came into force, and became a Commission in 1997.

The main objective of the GFCM is to ensure the conservation and the sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea ([GFCM area of application](#)).

The GFCM is currently composed of 24 members ([23 member countries](#) and the European Union) who contribute to its autonomous budget to finance its functioning and 3 Cooperating non Contracting Parties (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Ukraine).

Membership is open to Member and Associate Members of the Organization and such non-member States as are members of the United Nations or any its specialized agencies that are coastal States or regional economic organization whose vessels engage in fishing in its area of application.

The four official languages of the Commission are Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

The GFCM implements its policy and activities through its [Secretariat](#), based at its headquarters in Rome, Italy. The Commission holds its regular sessions annually and operates during the intersession by means of its committees: the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC), the Scientific Advisory Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ), the Compliance Committee (CoC), the Committee of Administration and Finance (CAF) and their subsidiary bodies, including the Working Group for the Black Sea (WGBS). The GFCM Bureau steers strategic orientations to the Commission and the Secretariat.

The Commission has the authority to adopt binding recommendations for fisheries conservation and management in its area of application and plays a critical role in fisheries governance in the region. In particular, its measures can relate for instance to the regulation of fishing methods, fishing gear and minimum landing size, the establishment of open and closed fishing seasons and areas and fishing effort control. In cooperation with other RFMOs, the GFCM plays a decisive part in coordinating efforts by governments to effectively manage fisheries at the regional level following the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries ([CCRF](#)). Moreover, it closely cooperates with other international organizations in matters of mutual interest and it benefits from the support of cooperation projects and programmes at the regional and subregional level in order to enhance scientific cooperation and capacity-building among its Contracting Parties.

GFCM has recently amended its legal framework and the Agreement for its establishment with a view to enhancing its efficiency and thus better responding to current and future challenges in the whole region.

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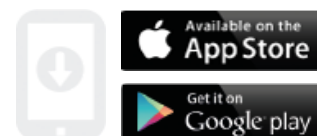
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