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Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members – Original language

ERC/26/15 – Agenda Item 24 - Report on the outcomes of the debate of the 48th session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

Member	Statement
European Union	1. I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. 2. The EU and its Member States take note of the ‘Report on the outcomes of the debates of the 48th session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)’. 3. The GFCM, as a Regional Fisheries Body of the FAO, aims to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region. 4. Within the framework of the GFCM, binding recommendations are adopted for the contracting parties, primarily concerning management and conservation, as well as monitoring and data collection. The GFCM also serves as an important scientific forum for assessing the status of relevant fish stocks, for which multi-year management plans are adopted to ensure their long-term sustainable exploitation, alongside non binding resolutions providing policy guidance. 5. The EU and its Members States welcome the regular publication of The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries (SoMFI) report, which provides a comprehensive review of the status and trends in the GFCM area of application and serves as a key tool to support evidence-based decision-making and monitor progress towards the Commission’s objectives.

	6. We greatly appreciate the fact that the management measures implemented reflect progress in the sustainable management of these seas. As confirmed by SoMFI 2025, the proportion of stocks exploited sustainably has increased significantly, rising from 11% in 2021 to nearly 49% in 2025. Over the last decade, fishing pressure has been reduced by 50% and fishing mortality is approaching maximum sustainable yield levels. In this regard, the biomass of commercially important species has increased by 25%. 7. Progress has also been made in the field of aquaculture, with the adoption of guidelines for harmonised environmental monitoring programmes and the establishment of designated restoration areas to promote regenerative aquaculture. 8. While significant progress has been made in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region, persistent challenges remain, most notably related to compliance and full implementation of GFCM decisions. Therefore, the EU and its Member States wish to emphasise the importance of intensifying efforts and supporting the crucial role of the GFCM in helping Member States address these challenges, towards levelling the playing field for all operators. 9. Finally, the EU and its Member States underline the importance of adopting effective fisheries management measures based on the best available scientific knowledge and supported by robust and reliable data. This approach, which must integrate biological, economic and social information, is essential to ensure that balanced decisions are taken across the pillars of sustainability, with the aim of moving towards sustainable fishing and resilient aquaculture throughout the Mediterranean and Black Seas.
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