



STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IN THE WESTERN-CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN

Phase II of the CopeMed project was designed to build upon the results achieved during Phase I, which took place between 1996 and 2005. The main objective of the project, which was co-funded by the Government of Spain and the European Union, was to strengthen regional cooperation in support of the sustainable management of fisheries, in a region where marine fishing resources are shared among countries with different socio-economic, cultural and development levels.

The strengthening of research and institutional capacities in participating countries contributed to the provision of better scientific advice. In cooperation with other FAO regional projects, and in collaboration with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the ultimate aim was to contribute to the sustainability of marine fisheries and of the ecosystem in the Western and Central Mediterranean Sea, taking into consideration environmental, biological, economic, social and institutional issues in scientific advice to fisheries management. The participating countries were Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Spain and Tunisia.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The three immediate objectives of CopeMed Phase II were to (i) strengthen the national capacity to obtain statistical data on catch and effort, including biological and socio-economic data, (ii) strengthen fisheries scientific research and upgrade the research activity in both the national and international contexts and (iii) strengthen institutional capacity at national and international levels.

The project contributed to enhancing and consolidating past achievements, such as (i) the establishment of regular subregional working groups that met annually to discuss progress in the analysis of data on stocks of interest to the subregion, such as hake, red mullet, deep-sea pink shrimp, blackspot seabream, dolphinfish, sardine and anchovy, (ii) the provision of training opportunities on data collection and analysis and stock assessment methods, (iii) the standardization of methodologies across the region, (iv) the mainstreaming of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) management, including through support for pilot case studies in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and (v) support for the active participation of experts from central and Western Mediterranean countries in subregional and regional activities promoted by regional projects, the GFCM and other regional organizations.

KEY FACTS

Latest Approved Budget
USD 3 298 916

Duration
December 2007-June 2022

Resource Partner
Government of Spain

Partners
National Centre for Research and Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture (CNRDPA, Algeria), National Institute of Fisheries Research (INRH, Morocco), National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies (INSTM, Tunisia), Marine Biology Research Centre (MBRC, Libya), General Directorate for Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture (Italy), Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (Malta), French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (IFREMER, France), Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO, Spain)

Beneficiaries
Fisherfolk, scientists, national fisheries authorities, civil society

IMPACT

The expected impact of the project was the reinforcement of the scientific basis for cooperative management of the shared multispecies fisheries in the Central-Western Mediterranean through the support to the organization and successful implementation of subregional research programmes, the establishment of scientific networks and the improvement of national capacity-building, as well as the involvement of stakeholders in technical discussion on fisheries management.

ACTIVITIES

- National fisheries monitoring systems improved through support for statistics and information-related issues, such as the national small-scale fisheries (SSF) statistical system in Tunisia and the diagnosis of the national biological data collection system in the main ports of Morocco.
- Support for biological sampling carried out for species including hake and sardine (Algeria), blackspot seabream (Morocco) and European eel (Tunisia).
- Workshops and on-the-job training organized for national staff on the collection and analysis of fisheries data, including the CNRDPA (Algeria) and the INSTM (Tunisia).
- Seminars, training courses and training stays organized for stakeholders, including the summer school in quantitative fisheries stock assessment, training on analysis and interpretation of data from acoustic surveys, a training workshop on fishing gear technology and selectivity and a course on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) management.
- Working groups organized to ensure subregional cooperation and coordination on fisheries scientific and management issues. The topics for the working groups included demersal stocks and small pelagic stocks in the Alboran Sea, assessment of blackspot seabream, and the status of fisheries including dolphinfish and European spiny lobster.
- Collaboration with other FAO regional projects in the Mediterranean, such as AdriaMed, EastMed and MedSudMed, and participation in the meetings and workshops of the GFCM.
- Pilot studies carried out on the management of the El Bibane lagoon and on the island of Djerba (both Tunisia) following the EAF. Further pilot studies in western Béjaïa (Algeria) and M’Diq Bay (Morocco) were also initiated (though these could not be completed as planned due to the COVID-19 related restrictions).



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Project Title

Coordination to support fisheries management in the Western and Central Mediterranean (CopeMed Phase II)

Project Code

FAO: GCP/INT/028/SPA

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