

COUNTRY NOTE ON NATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS -- GREECE

1. A short introduction to the Fisheries sector

1. Total fisheries production in 2002 is estimated at 99 029 tons with a total value of approximately EUR 329 270 thousand. Fisheries products represents 0.19% of GDP (year 2001), whereas total production including aquaculture reaches 0.39% of GDP.

2. Fisheries in Greek waters are characterized as multispecies and target mainly demersal and pelagic fish stocks. The demersal species such as hake, red mullet, cephalopods and shrimps are mainly caught by trawlers, while small pelagics such as sardine, anchovy, bogue, mediterranean horse mackerel and scorbidae are caught by purse seiners. Among highly migratory species(tuna and tuna like species), the main commercially valuable species are bluefin tuna ,swordfish and albacore. About 50 – 60% of total domestic fisheries production consists of small pelagics.

3. The fishing fleet in 2002 was composed of 19 504 boats whose total tonnage amounted to 97 579 GRT and total power to 599 553 KW.

4. The small scale fisheries compose the biggest category in the Greek fleet. A total of 33 992 fishermen were employed in the sector.

2. A description of the management regime in place

2.1. The main objectives followed:

5. The objectives of fisheries management is the rational exploitation of fisheries resources, the protection of vulnerable areas and species that are overexploited, with the main scope being the sustainable development of the sector.

2.2. The institutional set-up:

The legal framework:

6. As Greece is a member of the European Union, the Common Fishery Policy (CFP) and its legislation is directly applicable. Beside the Community law there is a variety of national measures aiming at regulating fishing effort in conjunction with appropriate technical measures, which include minimum landing size of commercial species, mesh size regulations, closed areas and seasons, and minimum depths and distances from shore for fishing.

The national, regional and local responsibilities:

7. The Ministry of Agriculture's General Directorate for Fisheries is responsible for developing and implementing fisheries policy. Within its purview are capture fisheries, aquaculture and marketing sectors. The Ministry of Mercantile Marine's Directorate of Port Police and the local port offices are responsible for inspecting the implementation of marine fisheries policy. The Fisheries Divisions of Local Authorities

of the Prefectures are responsible for implementing fisheries policy. The Ministry of Commerce inspects the market for fisheries products.

The fisheries industry participation:

8. Fisheries Council is a body in which administration, researchers and representatives of the sector participate. This body examines and introduces the new fisheries legislation.

2.3. The management instruments:

9. The fishing management is conducted in the frame of European legislation and also according to the recommendations of ICCAT, as far as the conservation of large pelagics is concerned.

TACs and Quotas:

10. In application of Council Regulation 2341/02 a TAC of 437.5 tn/yr of bluefin tuna is allocated to Greece for 2003. No other stocks of fisheries products were subjected to TACs and quotas for 2003.

Structural policy and management of capacity:

11. In the framework of the Common Fishery Policy and in application of the measure of scrapping, 18 trawlers, 7 purse-seiners, 26 beach trawlers, and 490 coastal fishing vessels were withdrawn from fishing activity and consequently a reduction of about 940 GRT of the fleet was achieved with a resultant loss of about 867 permanent jobs during last year. Other measures, like renewal and modernization of vessels and socioeconomic measures were also endorsed in respect of the sustainable development of the sector.

Conservation, management and exploitation of marine resources:

12. Regarding the conservation of aquatic living resources, the Greek legislation provides a series of measures for the prohibition or restriction of fishing activities in spawning and nursery areas, protected areas and during critical periods for juveniles and reproduction.

Common Organization of the Market:

13. The European Community in order to achieve a sustainable management of fisheries products has introduced and encourages the establishment of Producer Organizations (P.O.). These organizations that are formed on a voluntary basis by regional groups of producers of one or more fisheries products are strategically positioned between primary production and marketing and are able to contribute in a substantial way to the management of the resources by organizing collectively the fishing activities and also by regulating the stability of the market. In this context, POs have the obligation to submit annually an Operational Program to the Responsible Authority of the country where the planning of the fishing activities for this year is presented, including the marketing regime as well as the penalties imposed to its members in case of non-conformity with the provisions of the operational program. In Greece, two Producer Organizations have been formed and are currently in operation; they operate in specific regions of the country and concern both aquaculture products (the latest, established in 2002 concerns mussels) and fisheries products. According to their operational program and in case of withdrawals, a system of financial compensation is in operation in order to ensure the stability of price and markets. The processing industry is currently in part utilizing raw material covered by autonomous community tariff quotas.

14. Overall, the market of fisheries products in Greece is regulated by the adoption of community legislation that regulates the Common Organization of the market in community level.