
FINAL DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The body of the final report as well as future recommended actions to take were discussed. The interests and potential role of COPEMED in these activities was outlined by the director of COPEMED, Rafael Robles. Two main issues central to COPEMED's interests are: 1) support to the SAC-GFCM and 2) effort to bridge the gap between the northern and southern Mediterranean. The need for the organisation of knowledge and information prior to any transfer of expertise between the northern and southern Mediterranean countries was emphasised. Given the lifetime of the COPEMED project, a number of shortterm actions were identified as feasible. Longterm actions were viewed as necessary, but perhaps beyond the scope of COPEMED. Shortterm actions were viewed as potentially feasible within the context of COPEMED's priorities and lifetime. The following is a summary of longterm and short term actions:

SHORT TERM RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

- **Hold workshops to asses data availability in specific Mediterranean sub areas (workshop A):**

Collaborative projects between countries will require the formulation of common questions to address and access to data. Based on the outputs of the present workshop, this workshop would allow for reformulation of questions to address and data needs to reflect the scale of area of interest and data availability. Areas identified as potential sites for collaborative projects were: Alboran Sea, Northwestern Mediterranean Sea, Adriatic, Sicilian channel and Aegean Sea. The Director of COPEMED expressed interest in sponsoring workshops that will focus on the Alboran Sea and Sicilian channel, if the countries show interest in it.

- **Prepare a catalogue of existing**

- **Mediterranean data-sets/databases**

A list of data-sets/databases in the Mediterranean specifying type of data, data owners and contact information would help improve data access in the Mediterranean. A number of data-sets exist in the Mediterranean but often access to these data-sets is limited. Language differences and lack of knowledge of data owners were identified as limitations. There are also a great number of data in unpublished reports. Any monitoring programme or cooperative project will require prior knowledge of what data presently exist. This list would achieve this purpose. At the moment scientists who are not part of or in close contact with institutions holding the information have limited access to it. Often a gap is created, for example, between scientists from northern and southern Mediterranean institutes. This type of effort could help bridge that gap. The Director of COPEMED expressed interest in this action and will consider coordinating this activity.

- **Carry out a training workshop**

A number of useful data analysis techniques were identified during this workshop to analyse information regarding fishery environment relationships. These applied successfully in some areas. A training workshop would provide training for scientists unfamiliar with these techniques. The analysis of data using similar tools would facilitate collaboration between scientists and the organisation of knowledge/information in different areas. The Director of COPEMED has agreed to consider this action, if concerned countries show interest.

- **Hold a workshop to begin data analysis in areas of interest (workshop B):**

This workshop would be a continuation of workshop A. It would provide an opportunity

for scientists to conduct analyses using the approaches/tools agreed upon in workshop A. Scientists from participating countries would bring data from their area. Analysis of these data at the workshop would allow for the transfer of knowledge/expertise between scientists from different countries and the identification of common patterns emerging. The Director of COPEMED has agreed to consider this action if the lifetime of the project permits and participating countries put necessary databases at

LONG TERM RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

- **Establish a Mediterranean body such as PICES in the North Pacific:**

This body could coordinate: (1) operational questions of monitoring; (2) data exchange; (3) analysis and (4) promotion, development and execution of research agenda required. A review of the existing organisations in the region should be conducted to assess whether any of them

- **Establish a monitoring program:**

In order to achieve a full understanding of fishery variability, information on a number of forcing variables is required. Workshop participants identified the need for a properly designed monitoring program that will allow for collection of crucial information.

- **Establish a collaborative project involving scientists from different countries of the Mediterranean:**

Workshop participants emphasised the need for cooperative projects designed to further elucidate mechanisms linking changes in population of small pelagics with the environment. Projects of this nature will enable scientists to address questions at the appropriate scale (beyond political boundaries) as well as learn from the transfer of knowledge and expertise.