

OceanCare Intervention

40th session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) May 30 – June 3, 2016

Agenda Item, Tuesday 31 May:

5. Review of salient strategic initiatives

- Proposal for a GFCM strategy towards the improvement of the status of Mediterranean and Black Sea stocks, including:
 - Improving scientific knowledge, inter alia on socio-economic aspects of fisheries, on the basis of SoMFi 2016 and through the GFCM Forum on Fisheries Science

Distinguished Chair and Delegates,

OceanCare congratulates the secretariat for the strategy presented. We support an eco-system approach and spatial planning including temporal restrictions such as **marine protected areas (MPAs)** that are known to be effective in protecting marine life from human generated impacts for example underwater noise pollution.

Three decades of controlled scientific studies leave no doubt that intense sound damages fish and impacts fisheries. Underwater Noise has a negative effect on at least 55 marine species. Even the viability of fish eggs was reduced in one study when the eggs were exposed to moderately loud sound for several days.

‘Quiet zones’ should be established in key regions to create areas where noise does not rise above ambient sound levels.

OceanCare looks very much forward in contributing information on research and mitigation technologies to the GFCM on the negative impact of underwater noise pollution and other threats in order to support the protection of endangered marine species and support the implementation of relevant GFCM decisions as defined in the MoU signed yesterday.

Thank you Mr Chair.

Sigrid Lüber, OceanCare President (slueber@oceancare.org), May 31st, 2016