



MANTIS: Marine protected Areas Network Towards Sustainable fisheries in the Central Mediterranean

Report of the stakeholders meeting of the Strait of Sicily – Palermo

Palermo

21-07- 2019

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The 7th and final stakeholder meeting of the Mantis project was held back to back with the FAO MedSudMed technical meeting in support of fisheries management in the south-central Mediterranean Sea.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the Italian, Tunisian, Lybian, Maltese and Cyprus government and research institutes which form part of the MedSudMed network. Final Mantis project results for the Strait of Sicily were presented by Tommaso Russo during the first day of the meeting (see Agenda in Annex I).

The presentation showed that among the 14 scenarios tested, those providing the best compromise in terms of conservation and economic benefits were the scenario proposed by fishers (2-months summer trawling ban followed by effort regulation) and the scenario of GFCM FRAs closures + 8% effort reduction. The closure of the Adventure Bank FRA alone, although providing the highest conservation benefits, was detrimental to fishing income (Fig.1)

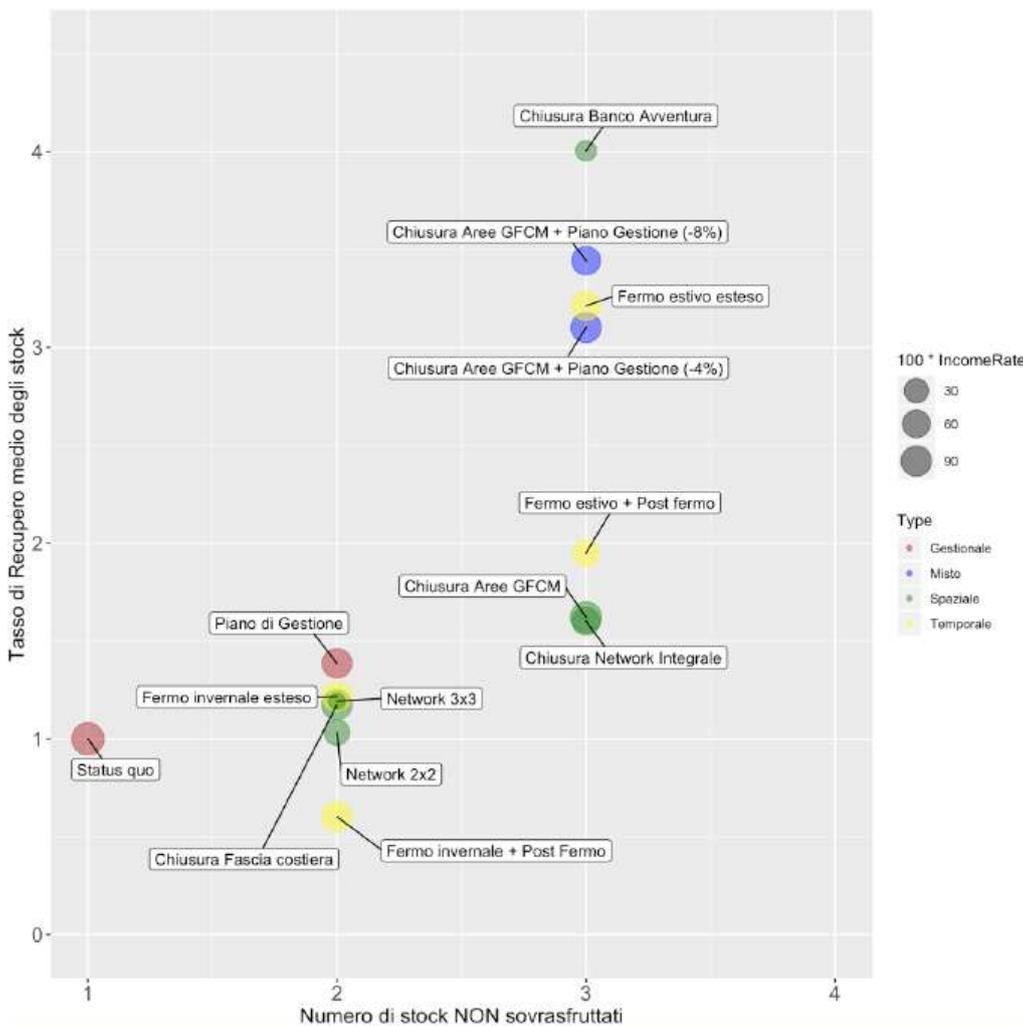


Fig.1 Conservation and economic benefits of the 14 teste scenarios.



Mr. Jarboui, Chair of the meeting, thanked Mr. Russo for the different scenarios provided, and encouraged including South Mediterranean data, considering socio-economic impacts after the first year of closure, and finally, evaluating the possibility of closing other fishing grounds in addition to those presented. Mr. Russo replied that for the moment, data from South Mediterranean countries are not fully reliable, and not available for many years. About the socio-economic impacts, he also added that the focus of the research was to evaluate the initial price that fishers would have to pay under different management scenarios (some of which resulted economically unsustainable for the fishers).

Mr. Fiorentino added that the estimates were based on geo-referenced information, and stressed the importance of having geo-referenced CPUE, effort, standing stock biomass as well as connectivity data. Once this information would be available from North Africa, the picture will be complete. Under this point of view, the role of MedSudMed is vital. Connectivity information is vital to define nursery areas as well as their spillover towards grounds in which juveniles become catchable adults.

Mr. Arneri thanked Mr. Russo for his presentation and expressed his gratitude to the MANTIS project for having included the concerns shared by fishers in the analysis. It was especially important modelling their behavior, to assess the potential choices made once an area is closed to fishing. Mr. Arneri also added that socio-economic data on Tunisian fisheries are being collected by MedSudMed and the INSTM, and that soon such an analysis will be applied to all areas.

For what concerns the simulations implemented under the MANTIS project, Sadok Ben Meriem from the INSTM added that these should be performed carefully. This is because the interaction among different species also needs to be considered in order to avoid biased results. In addition, the projection should be extended further to the first year, because it is clear that at the beginning of a fishing restriction there will be a decline in the catch and therefore in profitability, but in the medium and long term it is highly likely that the catch will recover and, thanks to a balance in terms of price per kg of target specie also the profitability of the fishery will recover.

Overall the participants welcomed the presentation, which highlighted the amount of work done and results achieved. In particular, the several scenarios tested and the overall approach adopted in the study presented were acknowledged, as well as the importance attached to inputs from fishers in scenarios identification and to fishers' behaviour in the simulation process.

The participants also noted that the data used comprised only the Italian fleet and looked forward to further expand the study. In particular, the importance to include in the model data from the southern part of the central Mediterranean and explore medium term projections for the economic studies was stressed. On this respect, Mr Russo confirmed the possibility to import and include in the study a wider set of data and reiterated that the more data are included in the model, the more robust would be the results. Regarding the economic projections, Mr Russo reiterated the main objectives of the simulation tool, that is to explore the initial loss in terms of catch and income that fishers would be called to face in the case one of the scenario considered would be applied.

As further comment, Mr Fiorentino recalled that SMART estimates were based on geo-referenced information; therefore he stressed the importance of having geo-referenced data on catch, effort, catch per



unit of effort (CPUE) standing stock biomass, as well as connectivity data for feeding the model. Accordingly, the need of gathering the best possible data from surveys at sea and commercial catch monitoring covering the entire Strait of Sicily was put forward. In this view, the participants concurred that MedSudMed would play a key role in supporting the collection and standardization of data for joint studies.



ANNEX 1 – AGENDA

European Commission, DG MARE

Agreement number – SI2 - 721911

MANTIS: Marine protected Areas Network Towards Sustainable fisheries in the Central Mediterranean

MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOPS ON THE MAIN RESULTS OF THE MANTIS PROJECTS IN
THE STRAIT OF SICILY

Palermo, 20 June 2019

To be held back to back with the MedSudMed technical meeting in support of fisheries management in
the south-central Mediterranean Sea

Hotel Astoria– Via Montepellegrino, 62 – Palermo - Italy

Provisional agenda

09:30-09:45 - Opening of the meeting and objectives presentation (Fabio Fiorentino)

09:45-10:15 - Simulating the effects of alternative management measures of trawl fisheries
in the Strait of Sicily including a network of FRAs (Tommaso Russo)

10:15-10:30 - Coffee break

10:30-11:00 - Discussion with stakeholders operating in the Strait of Sicily and conclusions
(Giulia Prato and Fabio Fiorentino)



ANNEX 2- Participants list

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INSTM = Institut National des Sciences et Technologies de la Mer (Tunisia)

UTAP= Union tunisienne de l'agriculture et de la pêche (Tunisia)

MBRC = Marine Biology Research Centre (Libya)

MESDC = Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change (Malta)