



КОНСУЛТАТИВЕН СЪВЕТ ЗА ЧЕРНО МОРЕ
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CONSILIUL CONSULTATIV PENTRU MAREA
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Minute

A BISAC Focus Group 2 meeting

May 12, 2021

Subject: FG 3 - Black sea rapa welk fishing.

On May 12, 2021, through the ZOOM system, a Focus group 3 meeting of BISAC took place on the topic - black sea rapa welk fishing.

The meeting was attended by video conference Mr. Galin Nikolov - NAFA Burgas, Mr. Konstantin Petrov - GFCM, Mrs. Ancuta Kazimirovicz - ANPA Bucharest, Mr. Violin Raykov - IO-BAS Institute.

BISAC members: Marian Paiu, Plamen Kamburov, Dimitrina Kostova, Anelia Ivanova and the BISAC secretariat.

The meeting was opened by BISAC President Yordan Gospodinov. Participants and guests at the meeting greet BISAC members.

Following is a presentation by Mrs. Mihaela Mirea, regarding the BISAC activity dedicated to rapana fishing.

- 2 meetings held on this topic
- Topic of interest for RO and BG fishermen, addressed at most meetings
- One meeting on 12.11.2019 and one on 8.07.2020
- The main conclusions:
 - In Bulgaria there is a delimitation of rapana and mussel habitats

- There is a need for thorough research, considering several parameters: water temperature, sea currents, etc. and involving the fishing industry

- Rapana has no current predator in the Black Sea and threatens mussels that act as biofilters

- Current catches are much smaller and smaller in size, which is no longer as effective for fishermen

- Rapana is a temporary resource, as it will no longer be profitable over time, and emphasis should be placed on the development of aquaculture

- The main way in which rapana stocks have decreased and thus allowed the recovery of mussel stocks is commercial fishing.

Mr. Gospodinov presented the data on rapana catches in Bulgaria, provided by NAFA Bulgaria, and Ms. Kazimirovicz on those in Romania - ANPA.

Year	Bulgaria - tons	Romania - tons
2018	3515	7302
2018	4222	6814
2020	2745	4115

It is observed that the year 2020 registered fewer catches, due to the pandemic situation. The same decreasing trend of catches was identified in the number of vessels dedicated to rapana fishing.

Mr. Galin Nikolov mentions that the year 2020 was indeed influenced by the pandemic, but that he hopes that in 2021 it will return to the situation of 2019. Rapana is a species of commercial interest that has an important influence on the environment and the social sector. It is important to follow the results of the BlackSea4Fish project.

Mr. Gospodinov added that both fishermen and scientists are announcing smaller and smaller sizes of rapana, hence the decrease of catches in weight. This is because the rapana no longer has so much food. The subsidy for small individuals of rapana can be a solution for the ongoing rapana fishing, which will compensate the losses from the fishing and the market, because there is no longer any interest for the small rapana. Still, the rapana serves as food for the people, although with lower price. Also, capturing small rapana with divers is very difficult and clearly needs to be subsidized.

Mr. Violin Raykov added that the ecological situation and the multiple pressures in the continental shelf influence major rapana and bivalves. Their size has also decreased due to pollution and anthropogenic impact.

Mr. Gospodinov pointed out that there are not enough studies to show the influence of rapana on bivalves. Water analysis is also important to see what chemicals and heavy metals are present. For example, there are paints that are spilled directly into the water and are very toxic.

Mrs. Mirea pointed out that fishing has to adapt to the environment and not the other way around. The stocks of rapana will decrease and will not be at the levels of previous years. Fishing must find alternatives.

Mr. Paiu mentioned that a study of the trawling effect is needed and that data for rapana must be further collected and the effort supported.

Mr. Petrov - sustainable management of rapana has an economic effect, and a social, environmental impact. A sustainable model based on scientific studies is needed. GFCM has assessments for rapana and other species and there is also a group for the Black Sea, and BISAC is invited to participate.

Within the BlackSea4Fish project there is a work package dedicated to the data obtained by fishermen about the places where these species were harvested. Board members are invited to contribute with this information.

Mr. Gospodinov also presented information from Turkey that shows that rapana has diminished, and the remains of bivalves that have reached the shore are not necessarily due to fishing, but because of the rapana.

Ms. Kazimirovicz pointed out that this economically valuable species must be fished, but climate change and other influences will affect this economic activity. It is important to follow the advice of research institutes.

Proposed recommendations:

- Carrying and supporting detailed studies on the evolution of rapana stocks and the impact of this species on other bivalve species
- Subsidizing catches of small rapana individuals in order to increase its harvesting from the sea, which will decrease the pressure on the bivalves
- Development of aquaculture opportunities and species diversification (eg algae cultivation)
- Clarification of the legislative framework to allow and support aquaculture activity
- Sustained communication between fishermen and authorities to identify alternative solutions / species

The meeting is closed.

The minute was prepared by: Mrs. Mihaela Mirea

President of BISAC: Dr. Yordan Gospodinov