Oceana recommendations

# AMEND THE PUBLIC GFCM AUTHORISED VESSEL LIST TO STRENGTHEN COMPLIANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

Preventing public disclosure of information is a major impediment to achieving sustainable fisheries management and stringent fisheries enforcement. This problem is characterised by a lack of information on important elements of who is authorised to fish, where, when, how and what. Disclosure of information on the beneficial ownership of fishing vessels, and records of non-compliance of vessels or companies is also vitally important for improving accountability and assisting enforcement efforts. Lack of transparency on beneficial ownership or authorised vessel lists provides an excuse to flag and coastal states to evade their responsibility to enforce fisheries rules. Improving transparency and the accuracy and completeness of publicly accessible information is one of the most effective paths towards ending IUU fishing, and can expose and stop these activities.[1] Creating up-to date, public and comprehensive authorised vessel lists that include information on beneficial ownership will remove the current veil of secrecy and ambiguity of who can fish where, when, and what, as well as who benefits.

**It is therefore essential to improve the public GFCM Authorised Vessel List, to make it complete, accurate, transparent and functional. This will also enable cross-checking of information and facilitate the detection of noncompliance cases.**

Currently the GFCM has an authorized vessel list (GFCM/33/2009/6), a regional fleet register (GFCM/33/2009/5), as well as various other vessels lists for certain Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs) and Multiannual Plans. Only a few of these lists are public.

Following best practice in the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), we recommend creating a single authorised vessel list that would include any vessel actively fishing for species managed by GFCM and subject to its management rules. The list should be updated on a regular basis, and any vessel not included in the authorised vessel list (and thus not authorised by the GFCM and the relevant flag state to operate in the GFCM management area) should be submitted to the Compliance Committee for possible inclusion in the IUU vessel list. Vessels which fail to fulfil registration requirements should not be added to the authorised vessel list and should thus be deemed unfit to operate in the Convention area. A regular update cycle of this list will further support the implementation of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) measures, including identifying IUU fishing activities.

To effectively stop IUU fishing and implement the Regional Plan of Action against IUU fishing we recommend improving the implementation of measures (data fields highlighted in orange) and amending Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/6 to include new data fields (highlighted in red).

*Driftnetters in the port of Alanya, Turkey.*

*Driftnetter and purse seiner in the port of Alanya, Turkey.*

*Trawler in the port of Grau du Roi, France.*

In short, Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/6 should be amended to make the following data mandatory and public, in line with best practice in ICCAT:

- Previous vessel name, previous flag state and previous owner
- Owner's address, city, zip code and country
- Operator's address, city, zip code and country
- Main, secondary and tertiary geographical subarea (GSA)
- If the vessel has an authorization to fish in a FRA. This is already required under Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/5 and should be included in the AVL. The following information should also be included:
  - Information on the type of authorization including the target species or species groups; Number of fishing days; Fishing gear; Area and period authorized
  - Type of fishing vessel

*View of the artisanal fishing port and the medina behind. Bizerte, Tunisia.*

## TABLE 1

**Examples of lack of implementation. Missing mandatory public information in current AVL (required, as per Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/6).**

- Missing information for EU countries despite EU requirement above the dashed line.
- Non-EU countries included as examples of lack of information below the dashed line (note that national requirements in those countries vary).

| Vessel Registration Number | MMSI | IMO | Fishing gear miscellaneous or not reported | IRCS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DZA | ESP | BGR | HRV (38/382) | ESP (47/730) |
| EGY | CYP (7/21) | ESP | | ITA (15/1446) |
| LBN | FRA | FRA | | |
| | GRC | GRC | | |
| | ITA | HRV | | |
| | PRT | ITA | | |
| | ROU (1/4) | ROU (2/4) | | |
| | | SVN | | |
| | ALB | ALB | ALB (10/175) | DZA |
| | DZA | DZA | TUN (9/950) | EGY |
| | EGY | EGY | TUR (103/9123 misc gears) | TUN |
| | MAR | MAR | | TUR |
| | TUN | MNE | | LBY |
| | TUR | TUN | | MAR |
| | | TUR | | |

# TABLE 2
## OCEANA recommended data fields in the GFCM AVL.

- GFCM - Mandatory: Mandatory data with "public" confidentiality status according to Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/6
- GFCM – Public: data included in the public GFCM AVL
- 🔴 Red highlighted categories: amending Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/6
- 🟠 Orange highlighted categories: improving implementation (e.g. data reporting)
- ✅ Green tick: data required by RFMO
- ❗ Orange exclamation mark: data required by RFMO but implementation issues
- ❌ Red cross: data not required by RFMO

  **Data fields in bold** are new additions proposed by Oceana to the AVL list

| DATA FIELDS | OCEANA RECOMMENDATION | GFCM[2] | | ICCAT[3] |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | MANDATORY | PUBLIC | |
| **Vessel Name (previous)** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| IMO registration number | Not implemented properly | ✅ | ❗ AVL lacks IMO numbers for Vessels that have IMO numbers – and report those – in other RFMOs or national registers | ✅ |
| **Previous flag State** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| Owner(s) | Make data public | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ |
| Owner Address | Make data public | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ |
| Owner City | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| Owner Zip Code | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| Owner Country | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| **Previous owner** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ❌ |
| Operator (if different from owner) | Make data public | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ |
| **Operator Address** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| **Operator city** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| **Operator Zip Code** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| **Operator Country** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ✅ |
| **Previous operator** | Make data mandatory and public | ❌ | ❌ | ❌ |
| International radio call sign (IRCS) | Not implemented properly | ✅ | ❗ AVL lacks IRCS numbers for vessels that have IRCS numbers – and report those – in other RFMOs or national registers | ✅ |

**TABLE 2**

**OCEANA recommended data fields in the GFCM AVL.** (Continued)

| DATA FIELDS | OCEANA RECOMMENDATION | GFCM[2] | | ICCAT[3] |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | MANDATORY | PUBLIC | |
| Maritime mobile service identity (MMSI) | Not implemented properly | ✔ | ❗ AVL lacks MMSI information | ✘ |
| **Period/time/places authorized for fishing and/or transshipping** | Make data mandatory and public | ✘ | ✘ | |
| Main geographical subarea (GSA) | Not implemented properly | ✔ | ❗ Not reported in public AVL despite requirement | n/a |
| Secondary GSA | Make data mandatory and public | ✔ | ✘ | n/a |
| Tertiary GSA | Not implemented properly | ✔ | ✘ | n/a |
| Main fishing gear used | Not implemented properly | ✔ | ❗ Incomplete (i.e. reported as "miscellaneous" or not reported despite requirement) | ✔ |
| Secondary fishing gear | Not implemented properly | ✘ | ❗ Not reported in public AVL despite requirement | ✘ |
| Third fishing gear | Not implemented properly | ✘ | ❗ Not reported in public AVL despite requirement | ✘ |
| **Authorisation to fish in a Fisheries restricted area (FRA), name of GFCM FRA (as adopted by the Commission)** | Make data mandatory and public | ✘ | ❗ *Incomplete (Not for all FRA – only Gulf of Lion) | n/a |
| **Type of authorization including target species or species group(s) (for FRAs)** | Make data mandatory and public | ✘ | ✘ | n/a |
| **Number of fishing days in the FRA** | Make data mandatory and public | ✘ | ❗ *Incomplete (Not for all FRA – only Gulf of Lion) | n/a |
| **Fishing gear(s) allowed in the FRA** | Make data mandatory and public | ✘ | ❗ *Incomplete (Not for all FRA – only Gulf of Lion) | n/a |
| **Area and Period authorized (if applicable) for fishing in the FRA** | Make data mandatory and public | ✘ | ✘ | n/a |
| **Type of vessel (e.g., trawler, longliner etc.)** | Make data mandatory and public | ✘ | ❗ Public AVL only includes incomplete information about the fishing gear, not the vessel | ✔ |

*There are some separate authorized vessel lists for certain FRAs, but most are not public. This information should be added to the main GFCM AVL.

### References

[1] Hutniczak, B. & Delpeuch, C. 2018. Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. Where countries stand and where efforts should concentrate in the future. Trade and Agriculture Directorate Fisheries Committee. OECD.
[2] Recommendation GFCM/33/2009/6
[3] ICCAT Record of Vessels (available from **https://www.iccat.int/en/vesselsrecord.asp**)