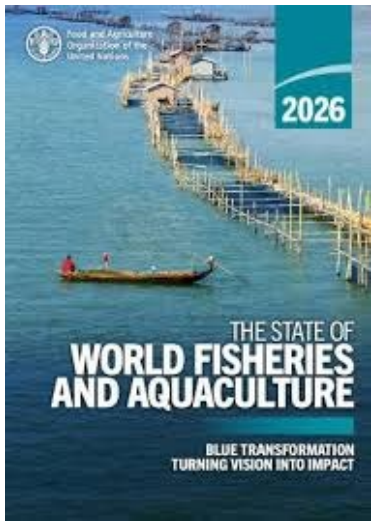

- 6th edition of The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries
- Prepared by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Data and information up to 2023
- Based mainly on official submissions from Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)
- Scientifically validated by GFCM advisory bodies

**Purpose**

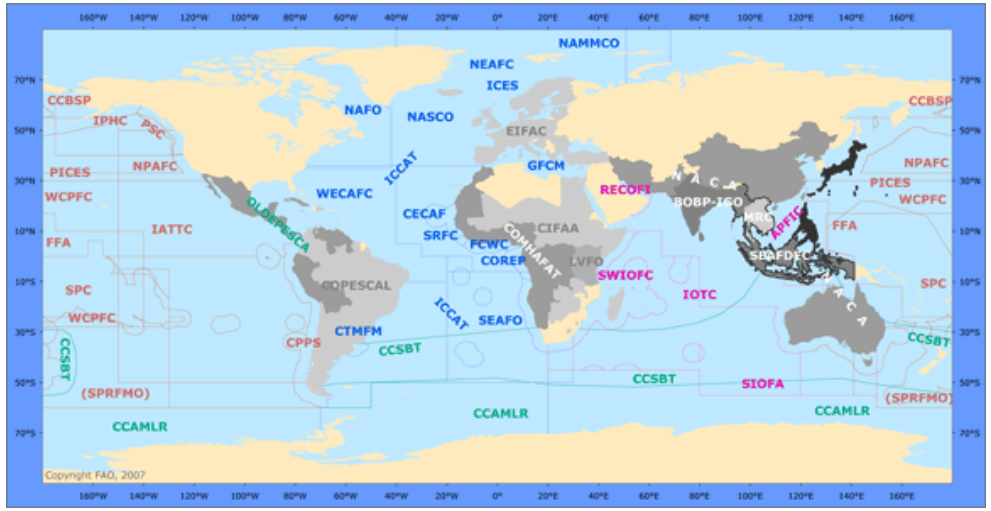
- Assess status and trends
- Support evidence-based decision-making
- Monitor progress towards the GFCM 2030 Strategy



# GFCM as a Regional Fisheries Body

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

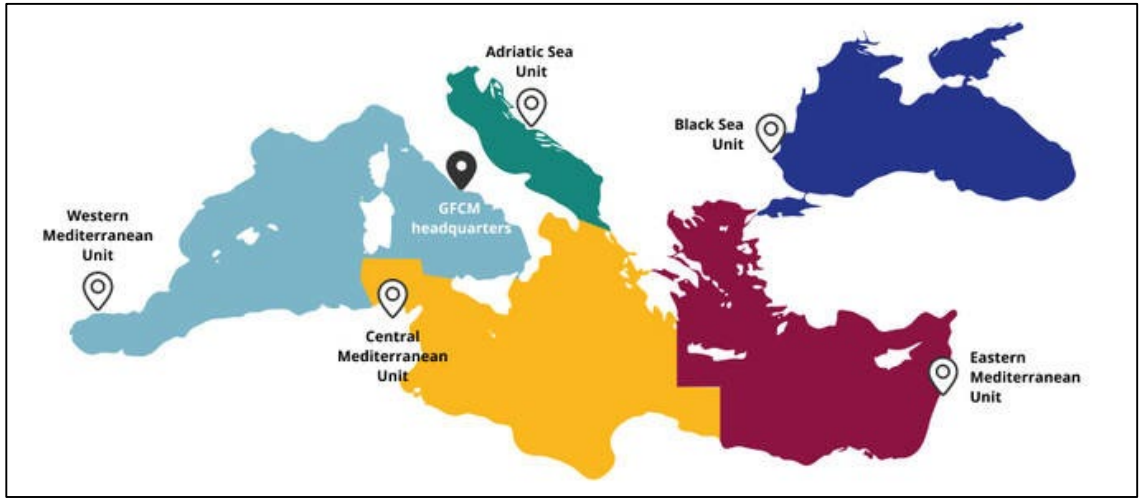
General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean




Established in 1949

24 Members :

- 19 Mediterranean states · 4 Black Sea states · European Union

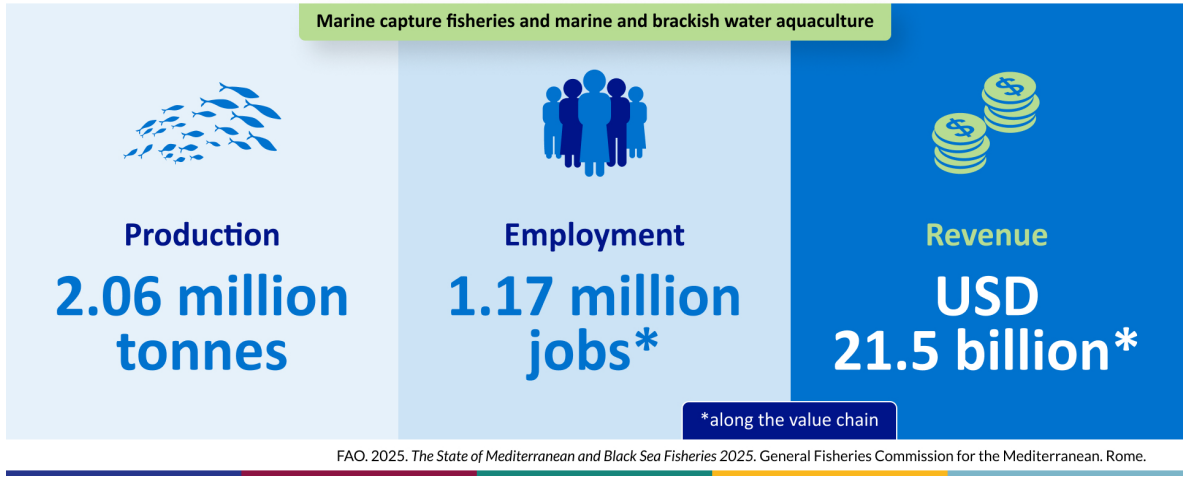



**Subsidiary bodies:**

- the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC)
- the Scientific Advisory Committee for the Black Sea (ACBS)
- the Scientific Advisory Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ)
- the Compliance Committee (COC)
- the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF).

## Content

# Overview of Aquatic Food Systems




FAO. 2025. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2025*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome.

- 83 075 fishing vessels.
- Aquaculture accounts for 46% of total aquatic food production
- More than 35 000 aquaculture enterprises

## Key Findings

- Aquaculture is the main driver of growth in aquatic food production
- Fisheries management measures are contributing to stock recovery and improved sustainability
- Despite positive trends, more than half of assessed stocks remain overexploited
- Aquatic food production needs a 14% increase to meet the demands

## Trends

- Aquatic food production increased by 25% over the last decade
- Capture fisheries production remained broadly stable

# Chapter 1. Capture Fisheries Production

**Status**

1.12 million tonnes of capture fisheries landings from about 83 000 vessels

Top producers: Türkiye, Algeria, Tunisia, Italy and Morocco

Small pelagic species: European anchovy, Sardine, Sprat, Chub mackerel, Horse mackerels

**Key Findings**

Stable production achieved alongside improving stock status

Recovery trends evident for several assessed stocks. Included:

- Common sole (*Solea solea*) in the Adriatic Sea
- Turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*) in the Black Sea
- European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) in the Adriatic Sea and in the Strait of Sicily
- Red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*) across assessed Mediterranean stocks [

Marked differences between the Mediterranean and Black Sea:

**Mediterranean**: more diverse fisheries, larger number of commercial species, generally lower catches per stock

**Black Sea**: catches concentrated on a few species, particularly small pelagics, with stronger influence of environmental variability and shared-stock management

**Trends**

Regional landings remained broadly stable over the last decade

Small-scale fisheries continued to dominate the fleet

Fleet ageing remains a widespread challenge

# Chapter 2. Bycatch: Discards and Incidental Catch of Vulnerable Species

## Status

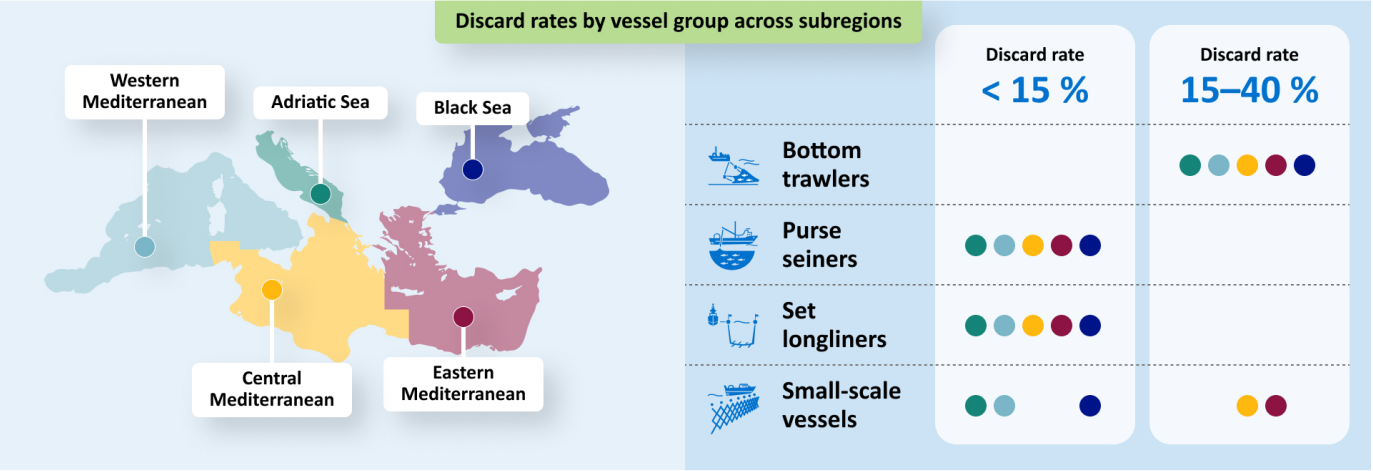
- Bycatch remains a significant challenge across the region
- Bottom trawls account for the highest discard rates
- Most affected groups: Sharks and rays, Sea turtles, Seabirds, Marine mammals

## Key Findings

- Bycatch levels vary considerably among fishing gears and areas
- Vulnerable species interactions are concentrated in specific fisheries and locations
- Improved data collection is supporting more targeted management actions
- Ecosystem considerations are increasingly integrated into fisheries management

## Trends

- Expanded observer programmes and monitoring systems
- Improved knowledge of bycatch distribution and hotspots
- Growing use of mitigation measures and best practices

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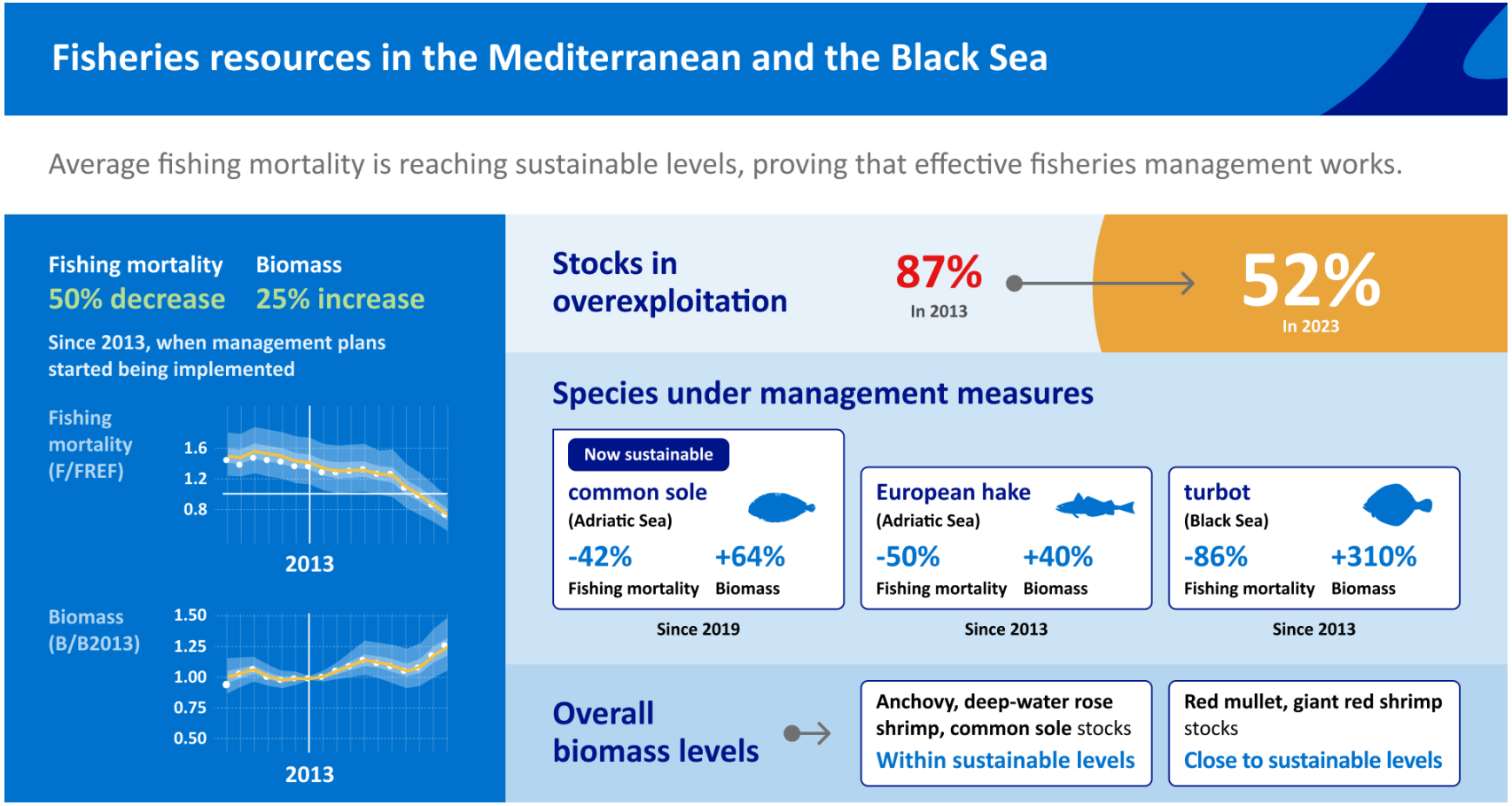
# Chapter 3. Status of Fishery Resources Status




FAO. 2025. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2025*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome.

- Stocks assessed: 45 in 2008. 120 in 2023
- Biomass of assessed stocks increasing

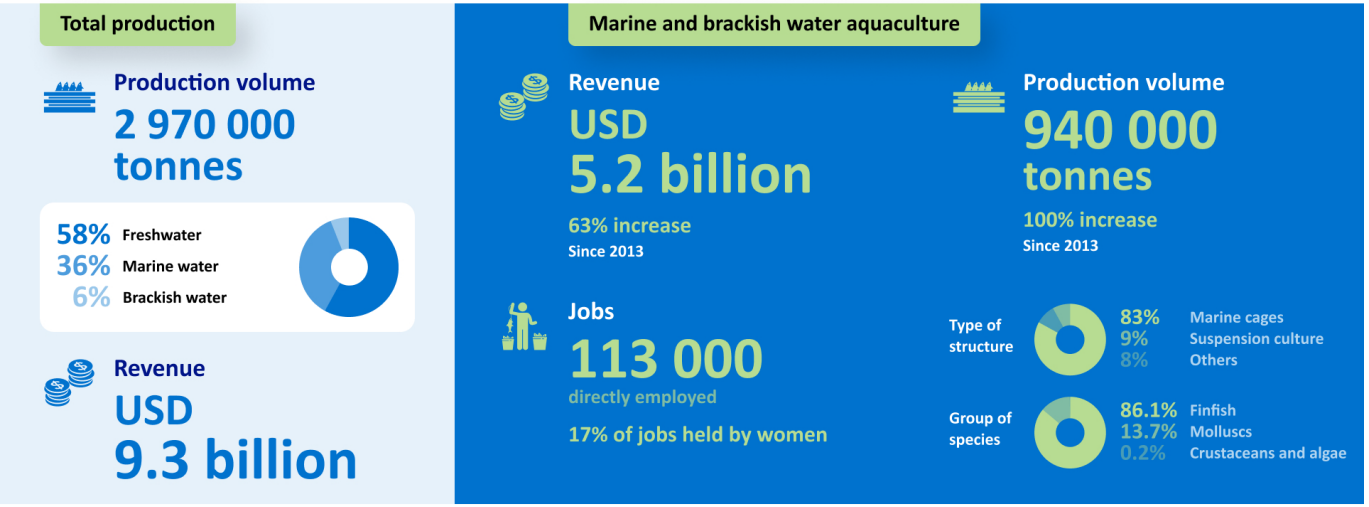
## Key Findings

- Lowest level of overexploitation recorded in the SoMFi series
- Clear recovery trends for several commercially important stocks
- Recovery remains uneven across species and subregions

## Trends

- Fishing pressure reduced substantially since 2013
- Share of sustainably exploited stocks steadily increasing
- Scientific assessments expanded both in coverage and quality

# Chapter 4. Aquaculture Production




FAO. 2025. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2025*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome.

- producers: Türkiye, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Spain
- Main species: seabream, seabass, mussel

**Key Findings**

- Main driver of aquatic food production growth
- Major contributor to food security and livelihoods
- Innovation boosting productivity
- Climate, disease and environmental challenges increasing

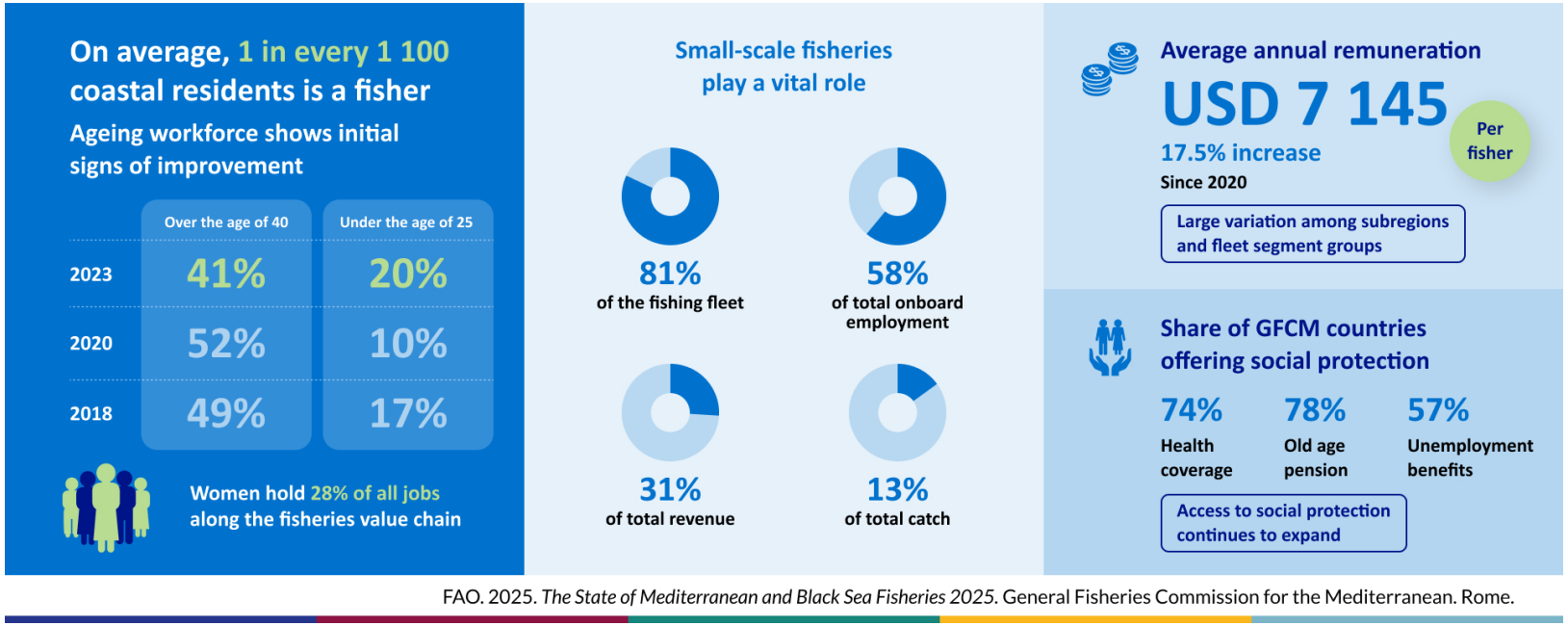
**Trends**

- Production more than doubled since 2013
- Expansion of marine cage farming
- Increasing species diversification

## Chapter 5. Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector

### Status

- 1.17 million jobs across the value chain
- Fisheries and aquaculture employment
  - Pre-harvest: 9 % ; harvest 26 %; post-harvest: 65%
  - Women: 29%; young people less than 7%
- USD 3.1 billion fisheries first-sale value
- USD 5.2 billion aquaculture production value

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### Trends

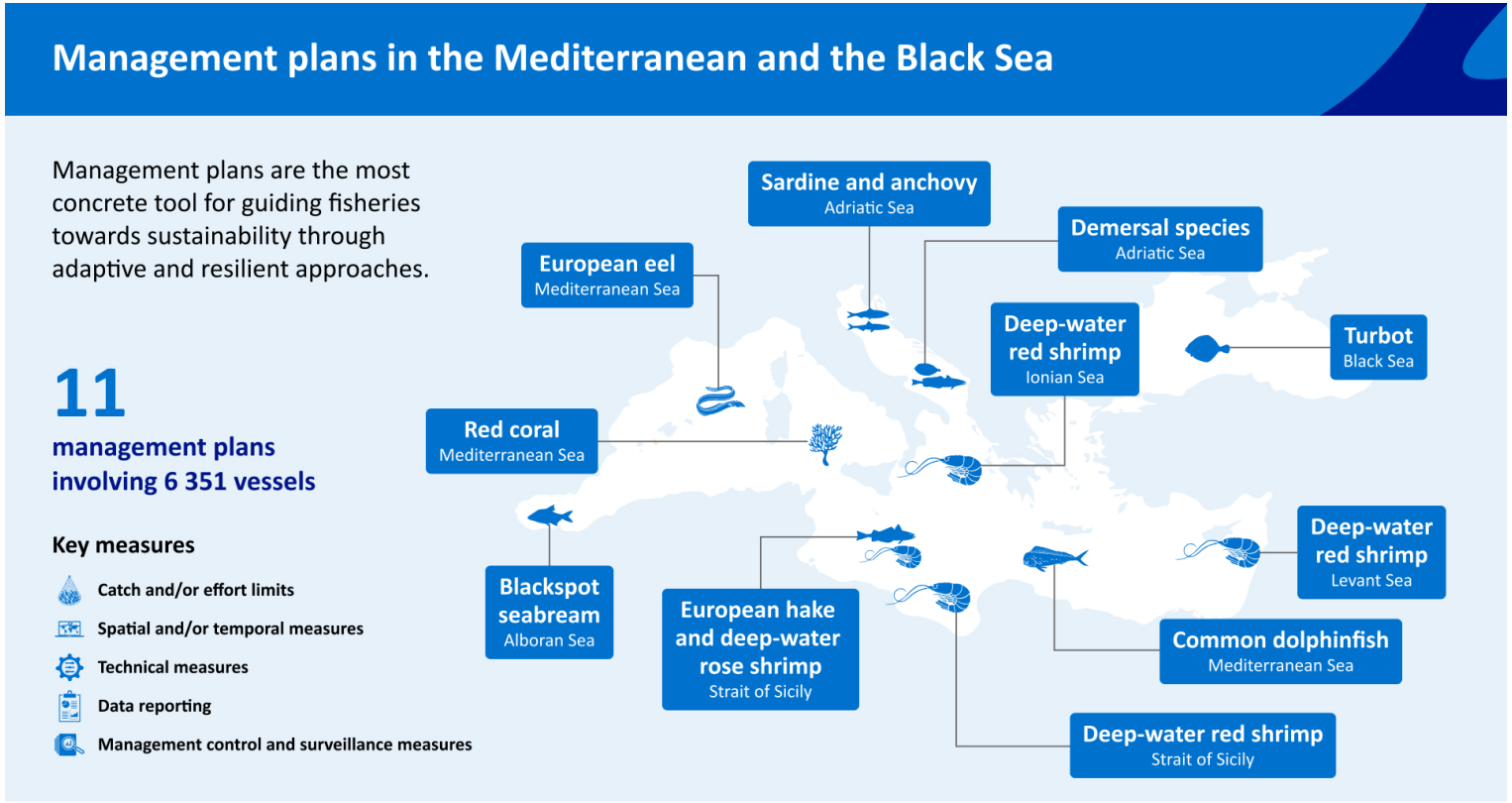
- Aquaculture's economic contribution increasing
- Aging workforce across the sector
- Low youth participation in many countries
- Continued importance of small-scale fisheries

### Key Findings

- Major contribution to livelihoods and coastal economies
- Strong role in food security and employment
- Economic performance varies across fisheries and aquaculture segments
- Need for greater youth engagement and gender inclusion

# Chapter 6. Fisheries Management Status

## Status




FAO. 2025. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2025*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome.

11 management plans
11 fisheries restricted areas.

## Key Findings

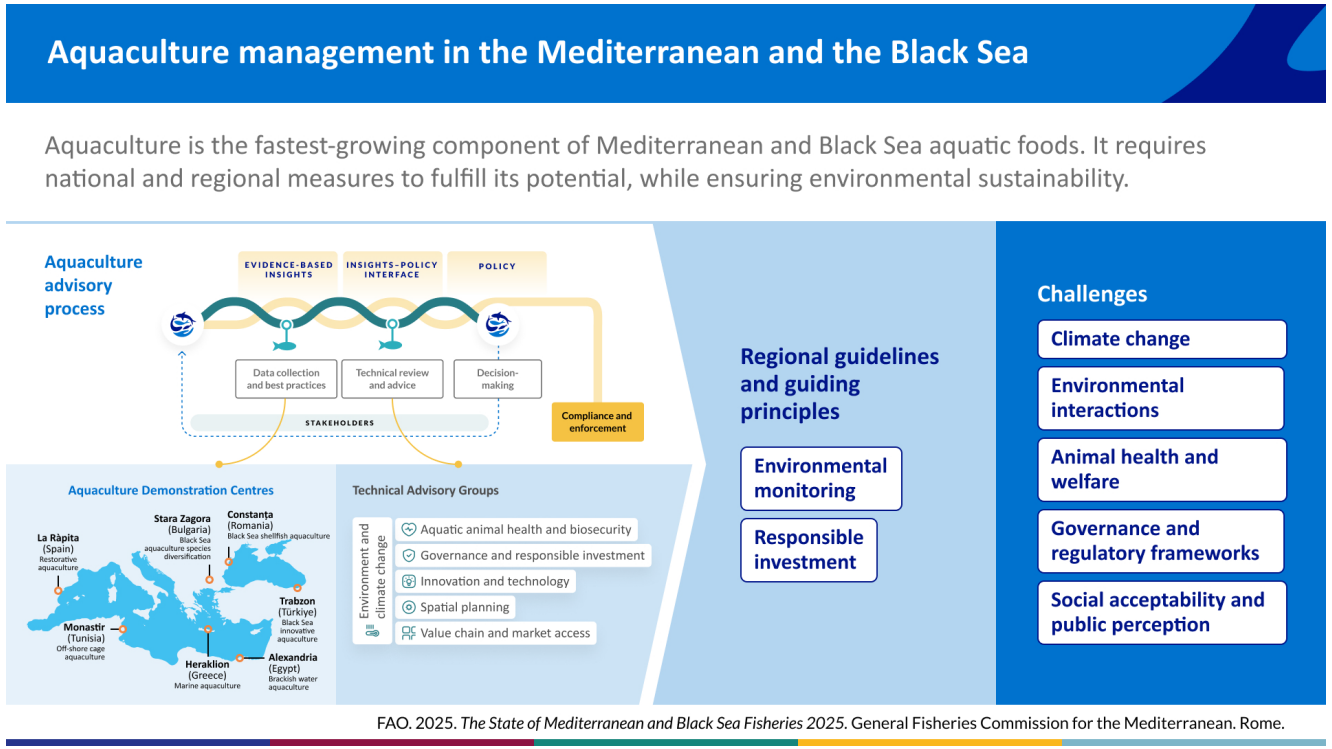
- Management plans supporting stock recovery
- Fisheries restricted areas strengthening fisheries and biodiversity protection
- Greater use of harvest strategies and control rules
- Improved monitoring, compliance and data systems
- Stronger small-scale fisheries participation and data collection
- average overall fishing pressure declined by 50% percentage of
- sustainable stocks doubled
- biomass increased by 25 percent.

## Trends

- Expansion of management and conservation measures
- Stronger science-policy integration
- Greater stakeholder participation
- More attention to small-scale fisheries

# Chapter 7. Aquaculture Management Status

## Status




FAO. 2025. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2025*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome.

- Improved aquaculture governance frameworks
  - Need for more actions for licensing and legislative fireworks climate-change actions, aquatic health management and biodiversity
- Wider use of Allocated Zones for Aquaculture (AZAs)
- Expanded environmental monitoring and planning tools
- Pprogress with financing mechanisms, infrastructure upgrades and improved traceability
- State aids for modernization

## Key Findings

- Stronger governance and planning supporting sustainable sector growth
- Environmental performance and monitoring improving
- Innovation and investment increasingly encouraged
- Licensing, financing and climate risks remain constraints

## Trends

- Stronger regulation and spatial planning
- Increased regional cooperation and knowledge sharing
- Growing focus on sustainability and climate resilience