



**Extract - report of the MEDITS meeting
Limassol (Cyprus), 6-7 April 2009**

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A meeting of the partners of the Medits surveys (International bottom trawl survey in the Mediterranean) has been held in Limassol (Cyprus), the 6-7 April 2009. The objective of this meeting was to co-ordinate the activities done in the frame of the Medits surveys.

Twenty-seven scientists from eight Mediterranean countries contributing to the Medits surveys, a representative of the European commission and a representative of the GFCM secretariat have taken part in the meeting (see the list in annex I). Furthermore, the meeting has welcomed a scientist from Egypt who was interested to better know the Medits activity and evaluate prospect for her country to join the network. Scientists from Bulgaria and Romania were invited to join the meeting, but without answer from them.

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[1] Common access to survey data

Access to primary Medits data is a subject of concern for the Medits partners since the beginning of project, having in view the necessary balance between a thrust sustained by scientific interest towards a free access to these data in one hand, and questions about data validation, data responsibility and intellectual property on the other hand. Various new signals invited to review this question during this meeting. Among them, and not the least, is the new European DCF which includes new rules related to data management and access. Also, existing projects (e.g. the Era-Net Marifish) are preoccupied by this question. To enlighten the reflection, Jacques Bertrand has explained the progress on this question in the Ices area. He has reminded the ICES decision to promote an open policy concerning all the data managed by the organisation, the full endorsement of this policy by the Ices-IBTS WG in 2008, and its application through a website which allows for an open access to the survey data (<http://datras.ices.dk>). He has also recorded that the partners of the 7th work package of Marifish Era-Net gathered in Corsica (31 March 2009) have adopted the following statement related to their data collected in the frame of the Medits surveys: *“The MariFish partners recognise that the final situation might be a full free access of the historical data. Nevertheless, to take into account intellectual property rights of the data and priority of use by the teams involved in the data production, the MariFish partners have decided (i) to put in website their historical data 1994-2001 and (ii) to ask to the national and EU relevant authorities to give access as soon as possible to the data obtained in the framework of the European data collection regulation (DCR). The MariFish group invites the other Mediterranean groups involved in Medits to join this initiative which intends to help the improvement on the Mediterranean fisheries knowledge.”* Furthermore, this statement indicates that this free access will be allowed only for non profitable purpose. The Italian group outlined that MariFish is a project funded by EC in which many Medits research groups (all in Italy) are not involved.

The participants have fully recognized the need to facilitate data access to the scientific community, particularly to the international organizations (like GFCM, which has its own data confidentiality rules) and shared research projects. Nevertheless, they had still concerns about a full free access of the primary data. For the time being, the common schedule remains access upon request. Furthermore, the meeting has been informed about ATrIS, a tool created as part of the AdriaMed project allowing to manage bottom trawl survey data. The group has expressed its interest for this tool and the Italian group has strongly supported the use of the tool created inside the AdriaMed project, indeed this tool is already used by some Medits partners. In addition the Italian group underlines that this tool can be a first step towards the organization of a common management of Medits data. The GFCM secretary has been invited to get in touch with the person in charge in AdriaMed to make this tool available to the Medits partners, for evaluation.

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