



IDENTIFYING, ADVANCING AND REPORTING OECMs

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*PRE-WORKSHOP CASE STUDY OF A POTENTIAL OECM
The Case of the Nile delta area cold hydrocarbon seeps FRA (Egypt)*





SITE DETAILS

What is the name and location of the ‘potential OECEM’?

- **Name:** Fisheries Restricted Area of the Nile delta area cold hydrocarbon seeps (Egypt)
- **Location:** NE Egypt (EEZ)
- **Governance authority:** International organization (GFCM)

SITE DETAILS





Criterion A: NOT A PROTECTED AREA

Is the area recognized as a protected area?

- FRAs are not in the Egyptian law of PAs or in the WDPA.

Recommendation GFCM/2006/3 on the establishment of fisheries restricted areas in order to protect the deep sea sensitive habitats.

The Scientific Advisory Committee has indicated that the area is characterised by an exceptional concentration of cold hydrocarbon seeps which had favoured the development of a unique living community and recommends that the area should be given a full protection status by avoiding demersal fishing practices.



Criterion B: Governance and Management

B1. GEOGRAPHICALLY DEFINED

*What are the area's boundaries, or
How will you ascertain the area's boundaries?*

- Geographically defined Boundaries in: *FAO. 2006. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Report of the thirtieth session. Istanbul, Turkey, 24–27 January 2006. GFCM Report. No. 30. Rome, FAO. 56p.*

31° 30.00' N, 33° 10.00' E

31° 30.00' N, 34° 00.00' E

32° 00.00' N, 34° 00.00' E

32° 00.00' N, 33° 10.00' E





Criterion B: Governance and Management

B2. GOVERNED

Who are the governance authorities? Are they government, private or Indigenous peoples/local communities?

- Egyptian government delegated by international organization: GFCM

Do they have rights to govern the area, or are the governance, land and/or natural resource rights contested?

- Yes, through multilateral agreement (GFCM)

Is the area equitably managed? Are any rightful governance authorities being marginalized?

- TBA?



Criterion B: Governance and Management

B3. MANAGED

What are the management objectives?

- To protect the deep sea sensitive habitats, especially the exceptional concentration of cold hydrocarbon seeps which had favoured the development of a unique living community.

How are the management objectives contributing to the conservation of biodiversity?

- TBA?



Criterion C: Effective and sustained conservation

C1. BIODIVERSITY VALUES

How will you assess the biodiversity values of the area?

- TBA?

What kinds of biodiversity values does the area have?

- The area is characterised by an exceptional concentration of cold hydrocarbon seeps which had favoured the development of a unique living community, including an exceptionally high concentration of unique communities of presumably chemosynthetic organisms such as polychaetes and bivalves.





Criterion C: Effective and sustained conservation C2,3,4. Effective Conservation

How are internal threats addressed? How are external threats addressed?

- Scarce info on threats.
- Fishing with towed dredges and bottom trawl nets shall be prohibited in the areas bounded by lines joining the following coordinates:” (FAO. 2006. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Report of the thirtieth session. Istanbul, Turkey, 24–27 January 2006. GFCM Report. No. 30. Rome, FAO. 56p).
- “The GFCM's regulations protect sensitive biodiversity in FRAs from some impacting fishing activities, such as bottom trawling, but not from others [...] such as artisanal or recreational fishing”. Moreover, “according to the mandate of the GFCM, FRAs regulations [...] are not intended to prevent or reduce other important threats to Mediterranean marine biodiversity such as pollution, oil and gas exploration and production, climate change, or the introduction of alien invasive species” (Rodríguez-Rodríguez et al., 2016).





Criterion C: Effective and sustained conservation C2,3,4. Effective Conservation

Is the management regime intended to be sustained over the long-term, or subject to change?

- The GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee endorsed a provisional definition of a FRA “A geographically-defined area in which all or certain fishing activities are temporarily or permanently banned or restricted in order to improve the exploitation and conservation of harvested living aquatic resources or the protection of marine ecosystems.”
- Long-term implied by “Fishing with towed dredges and bottom trawl nets shall be prohibited in the areas bounded by lines joining the following coordinates:” (FAO. 2006. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Report of the thirtieth session. Istanbul, Turkey, 24–27 January 2006. GFCM Report. No. 30. Rome, FAO. 56p).





Criterion C: Effective and sustained conservation C2,3,4. Effective Conservation

Is the area large enough on its own, or as part of an established and integrated conservation network, to conserve biodiversity in-situ over the long term?

- 437,700 ha.

Is the management regime in place year-round, or on another basis?

- Active management is not clear. “For the same areas, Members shall call the attention of the appropriate authorities in order to protect these areas from the impact of any other activity jeopardizing the conservation of the features that characterize these particular habitats” (FAO. 2006. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Report of the thirtieth session. Istanbul, Turkey, 24–27 January 2006. GFCM Report. No. 30. Rome, FAO. 56p.).
- “It is up to each member of the GFCM to enforce the regulations that affect its waters and to control the activities of its fishing vessels. Lack of effective cMPA management was identified as a major flaw in the Mediterranean, and was linked to insufficient financial resources. However, compliance in the Mediterranean iFRAs is being enhanced by the creation of the GFCM's Compliance Committee and the increasingly regulated use of remote vessel monitoring systems which is becoming mandatory in most Mediterranean countries through GFCM regulations” (Rodríguez-Rodríguez et al., 2016).
- All encounters with VME indicator taxa to be reported, but no management measures are currently applied (GFCM. 2018c. APPENDIX 17 Protocols for the protection of VMEs in the GFCM area of application IN "Forty-second session of the Commission. FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy, 22–26 October 2018").

Criterion C: Effective and sustained conservation C2,3,4. Effective Conservation

Is the biodiversity outcome being monitored?

- Background info on biological importance (FAO. 2005. Report of the sixth session of the sub-committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems (SCMEE), Rome, Italy, 27-30 September 2005. GFCM:SAC8/2005/Dma.1. 21 pp.) but lack of monitoring info since.





Criterion D: Effective and sustained conservation

D1. Associated Functions

Are there any associated ecosystem functions and services?

- Fish biomass? Other?

Are there any spiritual, socio-economic or other values associated with the area?

- TBA? The area is open to fishing in the water column.



Thank you

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WORKSHOP ON OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES IN NORTH AFRICA AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. *Tunis, 10 and 11 February 2020*

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PART B

CONSENT

WORKSHOP ON OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES IN NORTH AFRICA AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. *Tunis, 10 and 11 February 2020*

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Convention on
Biological Diversity





CONSENT TO BECOME A CANDIDATE OECM

If the area meets the criteria of a ‘potential OECM’, how will you engage with the legitimate governance authority/ies to discuss OECMs and whether they would like to be involved in an assessment of their area?

TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE WORKING GROUPS

