



**STATEMENT AT THE GFCM 47TH SESSION ON THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A FISHERIES RESTRICTED AREA
IN THE OTRANTO CHANNEL**

MedReAct warmly welcomes the establishment of a Fisheries Restricted Area in the Otranto Channel. We believe that this decision represents a milestone towards the protection of deep water marine ecosystems and essential fish habitats in the Adriatic Sea, and it comes following extensive research, consultation and collaboration among scientists, NGOs, the fishing sector and the national administrations.

We wish to congratulate in particular the European Union and Albania for all the efforts dedicated to reach this outstanding result.

The Otranto Channel is a key marine area rich in biodiversity, and plays a critical role in supporting fisheries and coastal communities livelihoods.

As we learned from the effectiveness of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA, by implementing Fisheries Restricted Areas jointly with other multiannual management measures, fish populations can recover, promoting not only ecological balance but also the long-term viability of our fisheries.

Finally, we consider that this decision is a further step towards the full implementation of the GFCM Resolution on a network of Fisheries Restricted Areas, and we strongly encourage CPCs to implement new FRAs in other subregions to complement fisheries management efforts and contribute to enhance productivity of marine life, for the health of the Mediterranean and the future of our coastal communities.
