

PRESS RELEASE

THE POMO/JABUKA PIT FINALLY CLOSED TO TRAWLING THE ADRIATIC RECOVERY PROJECT PLAYS FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN DECISION

Rome, 17 May 2017 – MedReAct and the Adriatic Recovery Project applaud the decision taken by Croatia to close to demersal and small pelagics fisheries part of the international waters of the Pomo Pit, the most important nursery area in the Adriatic for European hake and Norway lobster and one of the rare deep-water ecosystems of the Adriatic.

The decision, announced today in Ljubljana to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), marks an important step forward for the recovery of the Adriatic fish stocks and marine ecosystems, a sea basin strongly impacted by trawling, which is responsible for altering the bottom ecosystems, loss of biodiversity and declining fish stocks.

Last February MedReAct and the Adriatic Recovery Project had presented to the GFCM a proposal for the establishment of a Fishery Restricted Area in the Pomo Pit, closed to demersal fisheries such as trawling and set longliners. Today the proposal was endorsed by the SAC and will be transmitted to the forty-first session of the GFCM (Montenegro, 16-20 October 2017).

“We now call on Italy to adopt a similar set of measures” said Domitilla Senni, spokesperson for MedReAct, “which guarantee the full protection of key nurseries and vulnerable marine ecosystems in the area.”

Adriatic fisheries produce 50% of all Italian fish products, but landings have fallen by 21% from 2007 to 2015. In particular European hake has been subject to overfishing at five times the sustainable level, despite the fact that catches practically halved between 2006 and 2014. The situation is even worse in the case of Norway lobsters, where catches by the Italian fleet fell by 54% between 2009 and 2014.

The Adriatic Recovery Project is an international alliance of environmental organizations and research institutions created to preserve the vulnerable marine ecosystems and essential fish habitats of the Adriatic Sea.

The project is coordinated by MedReAct – a non-governmental organisation dedicated to the recovery of marine ecosystems and fish stocks of the Mediterranean – in collaboration with Legambiente, Marevivo, Stanford University and the Marche Polytechnic University.