

NORTHWESTERN MEDITERRANEAN FISHERIES

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Scientia Marina, 57 (2-3)
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This volume is dedicated to Dr. Carles Bas and Dr. Pedro Suau

With the support of the



Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament d'Agricultura,
Ramaderia i Pesca
**Direcció General de
Pesca Marítima**

FOREWORD

The Mediterranean fisheries have been much discussed in European scientific circles, with respect both to whether they are distinct from those in other areas (especially from those of the Atlantic), and to whether new methods must be devised for this Sea, or whether the fisheries are in fact similar and there is simply a different attitude on the part of the scientists who study them.

It is a fact that there are few published studies on the dynamics of exploited populations in the Mediterranean, which may be a result of the biological conditions, the fisheries, or the scientists. Most of the work done is disseminated via rather restricted channels, such as doctoral theses and meeting reports (above all those of CIESM and GFCM-FAO), which despite their great usefulness, do not correspond to what we understand as standard ways to transmit scientific knowledge.

Some investigators in the northwest Mediterranean thought that it would be useful to bring together in the same volume some recent research results, partly done jointly, in such a way that scientists who work in the area and in other geographical regions will have to hand a selection of these studies in a single issue of a widely circulated journal.

It has to be admitted that we have needed to break away from some collective habits, and that it has not been easy to compile the monograph presented here. We would have liked to have included a larger variety of themes and authors which we know exist. Nevertheless we hope that this volume, as well as increasing awareness of our problems, will also lead in a short time to further reports in the scientific literature of ongoing studies of the northwest Mediterranean fisheries.

As a colophon to this volume, we present the debate which took place in the "Workshop on methods to analyse the dynamics of exploited fish populations" which took place during the plenary meeting of the XXXIIIrd Assembly of the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea (CIESM), organized by the Marine Vertebrates and Cephalopods Committee.

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