Siphonophores distribution in Mediterranean Sea across biotic and abiotic gradients and the influence of these factors on their reproduction stage

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In the frame of the European MedSeA project research cruise (May 2013) zooplankton samples were collected by multi-net system (MOCNESS, covering the upper 600m) and Bongo nets (at 200m) from 21 stations distributed along the entire Mediterranean Sea from the Atlantic off Cadiz, Spain, to the Levantine Basin. At the same time biotic and abiotic parameters (including seawater carbonate chemistry) were collected. The main aim of this study is to improve our understanding of the environmental factors controlling the understudied gelatinous plankton (mainly Siphonophores) distribution in the Mediterranean Sea. 22 species of Siphonophores and their reproductions stages were manually sorted and identified under a stereoscopic microscope. We will present results on the geographical and vertical distribution and the environmental drivers of its biogeography, including a highly difference between two species distribution, *Muggiaea atlantica* (West Mediterranean) and *Eudoxoides spiralis* (East Mediterranean). The distribution models developed with the data contribute with the prediction of the species distribution and realize under which environmental conditions siphonophores breed.

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