**Figure and Table captions**

Figure 1. Map of the study area with the four regions under consideration when interviewing fishers.

Figure 2. Species that have grown and decrease since the start of the fishing activity up nowadays according to fishers’ perceptions. Numbers indicates the frequency of fishers’ answers.

Figure 3. Presence and relative abundance evolution of VMEs on bottom trawling fishing hauls as by-catch for the whole study area (Figure 1) according to fisher’s perceptions. Note: IE= *Isidella elongata*, OC= Other Corals, SP= Sea Pens.

Figure 4. Presence and relative abundance evolution of VMEs on bottom trawling fishing hauls as by-catch in the study area by sub-regions (Figure 1, areas 1 to 4) according to fisher’s perceptions. Note: IE= *Isidella elongata*, OC= Other Corals, SP= Sea Pens.

Table 1. The ten most relevant fished species according to fishers’ perceptions.

Table 2. Relative biomass level by priority species evaluated by GSA 6 and information provided by fishers’ interviews. Red colour: current low biomass in comparison with temporal series < 33rd percentile; Green colour: high biomass in comparison with temporal series > 66th percentile.

Table 3. Results of ANOSIM (R, P-value) tests comparing VMEs presence data from fishers’ perceptions in different areas (Figure 1) using all species, and separating species by Bamboo Coral (BC), Other Corals (OC) and Sea Pens (SP). Dark green represents highly significant comparisons (p-value <0.05), light green represents marginally significant results (p-value <0.1).