

**A SUPPORT BY THE ITALIAN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURAL, FOOD AND FOREST
RESOURCES (MRAAF) FOR THE STUDY OF THE LARGE PELAGIC STOCKS
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

Col.Vol.Sci.Pap. ICCAT, 44 (1) : 379-379 (1995)

de Metrio, G.

Department of Animal Production, University of Bari, Italy

The consciousness of the limits fixed by a wide distribution of the large pelagic fish species, together with the necessity of getting a deeper knowledge of these resources, with the collaboration of some research structures from other countries in order to rationalize fishing activities of the large pelagic fishes, very important within the Italian fishing, induced the Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forest Resources (MRAAF) to continue the researches on the large pelagic fishes, already started in 1984 within the first fishing triennial plan. For this reason also in the third fishing triennial plan it has been foreseen a research project on the evaluation of the biological resources of the large pelagic fishes, which started on the first February 1994 and will finish on January 30 1996.

The above-mentioned project has the following objects:

- 1) to exploit the results of the researches on the large pelagic fishes carried out in Italian Seas, especially in the last years, collecting all the results species by species;
- 2) to continue data collection about the fishing trend in some pilot ports determining effort and C.P.U.E per species and pilot ports as well as the catch distribution per size;
- 3) to continue the research on the biology of the large pelagic fishes, supporting the specialization of the operative unities of each species or biological parameters;
- 4) the analysis of the population structure of the main species throughout Italian Seas and with the samples from other geographical areas, even outside the Mediterranean Sea;
- 5) to carry out a tagging campaign on the large fish all linked to the CEE and ICCAT programmes;
- 6) to carry out a supporting campaign for the research of bluefin tuna larvae in the Mediterranean Sea according to the bluefin tuna ICCAT programme of 1994.

The species to be studied are the following:

Xiphias gladius, Thunnus alalunga, Thunnus thynnus, Sarda sarda, Auxis rochei, Euthynnus alletteratus, Seriola dumerilii, Coryphaena hippurus, Pomatomus saltator.

Ten operative unities are working on the project and their tasks within the programme are the following:

1. Department of Animal Production - University of Bari; scientific responsible: G. De Metrio;
coordination of the national project;
synthesis of knowledges: swordfish;
investigation area: North Ionian Sea;
species: bluefin tuna, albacore, swordfish, bonito, and bullet.

2. Laboratory of Marine and Fishery Biology - Fano - University of Bologna;
scientific responsible: C. Piccinetti;
synthesis of knowledges: bluefin tuna;
investigation area: North and Middle Adriatic Sea;
species: bluefin tuna.
3. Provincial Laboratory of Marine Biology - Bari; scientific responsible: G. Marano;
synthesis of knowledges: albacore;
investigation area: South Adriatic Sea;
species: bluefin tuna, swordfish and albacore.
4. Institute of Zoology - University of Geneva; scientific responsible: L. Orsi Relini;
synthesis of knowledges: bonito;
investigation area: Ligurian Sea;
species: bluefin tuna, swordfish, albacore, bullet and bonito.
5. Department of Biology - University of Messina; scientific responsible: G. Cavallaro;
synthesis of knowledges: bullet and tuna;
investigation area: Eastern Sicilian sea;
species: bluefin tuna, albacore, swordfish, bullet and bonito.
6. Institute of Zoology - University of Cagliari; scientific responsible: S. Cau;
synthesis of knowledges: little tunny;
investigation area: Sardinian Seas;
species: bluefin tuna, bonito, seriola, albacore, swordfish and bullet.
7. ICRAM - Palermo. scientific responsible: F. Andaloro;
synthesis of knowledges: seriola;
investigation area: Sicilian Seas;
species: seriola, little tunny and bluefish.
8. Department of Biology - University of Messina, scientific responsible: A. Potoschi;
synthesis of knowledges: dorado;
investigation area: Sicilian Seas;
species: Dorado.
9. Acquastudio - Messina; scientific responsible: A. Di Natale - F. Andaloro;
synthesis of knowledges: bluefish;
investigation area: Sicilian Seas;
species: bluefish.
10. Department of Molecular Biology - University of Rome; scientific responsible: Bullini;
task: investigation on the population structures by genetic analysis

As regards the studies on the biology of the large pelagic fish the following parameters will be considered: food, growth and reproduction biology.
The scientific responsible for the eggs and larvae campaign are the following:

C. Piccinetti (Fano); G. Marano (Bari); G. Cavallaro (Messina)