

Symposium 13

Lessons from local experiences: the Adriatic Sea

Conveners

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Key-note speakers

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Symposium description

The northernmost part of the Mediterranean, small comparing to oceans, but the different oceanographic characteristics that influence its biota makes the Adriatic Sea a unique environment: the western coasts under the direct influence of the Po River outflow opposite to the karstic eastern with numerous islands; the shallow nutrient rich northernmost part and the oligotrophic deeper southern basin with the Southern Adriatic Pit; the wide thermal and saline gradient... Such wide-scale differences are reflected in a wide variability both in benthic and planktonic algal communities. The interannual variability of the Po River outflow coupled with the changing loads of nutrients determined the alternation of eutrophic and oligotrophic periods. A number of striking phenomena have characterized the history of the Adriatic Sea, such as harmful algal blooms, hypoxia of bottom layer, large mucilage aggregate formation or benthic toxic dinoflagellate blooms. Plenty of meso and micro-areas possess their own phycological uniqueness: estuaries, islands rich in flora due to upwelling, 150 m deep *Laminaria rodriguezii* colonies, endemics like *Fucus virsoides*, ports under human pressure, alien macroalgae expansions or geologically recent escape from the sea such as *Pneophyllum cetinaensis*. Adriatic biota is now changing faster than ever. Alien species spread, coast is subjected to an intense human and touristic pressure. As a consequence, just in a few decades, the *Cystoseira* communities, climax of benthic vegetation, disappeared in a number of coastal areas. But what we indeed know about biology of the Adriatic biota? For sure, there are still plenty biological events to be discovered. Adriatic is the area where every phycologist can find its own lifetime occupation. We invite you to present your discovery of the Adriatic!
