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**Martedì 4 Ottobre 2016 - ore 12 SALA RIUNIONI
SEMINARIO**



**“Characterization of reproductive physiology,
abundance and spatial distribution of the European
anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) in the Adriatic Sea”**

Andrea Miccoli

ABSTRACT

Small pelagic fish are essential to marine ecosystems because they ensure a connection between lower and upper trophic levels, and ecological functions as well as species composition in the Adriatic sea have been the subjects of a thorough research in the past decades.

Pelagic species are subject to great fluctuations over time and space. Their biology, overfishing practices and both abiotic and biotic environmental factors play a role in determining such variability. Among the most important Mediterranean coastal pelagic species is the European anchovy, even though its ecological and economical roles are not supported by a sound knowledge of its biology. Many aspects have been investigated (vertical distribution, feeding ecology, genetics, reproductive strategy and the role of environmental cues on it), however there is no information whatsoever concerning its reproductive physiology or any genomic/molecular resources for the reproductive hormonal cascade.

The aim of my PhD was to reduce the gap in this sense. Through a multidisciplinary approach, I worked to characterize fundamental European anchovy's transcripts related to the reproductive process in the Adriatic Sea stocks. I worked on the Gonadotropin Releasing Hormones, the Egg Envelope Proteins, the determination of the biological outcomes of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals and, at last, on estimating the species' abundance and spatial distribution by acoustic methodologies, in collaboration with the Italian National Research Council's Institute of Marine Sciences.

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