



Winners, losers and shifts of the pelagic ecosystem of the Western Mediterranean Sea

Marta Coll, 9th of November 2022



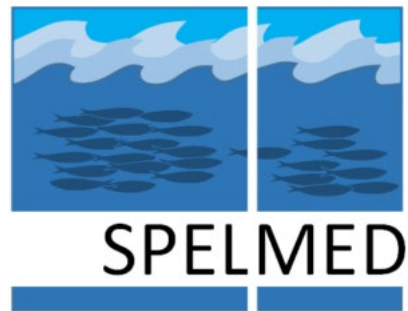
**Small Pelagic Fish:
New Frontiers in Science
and Sustainable
Management**
November 7 - 11, 2022
Lisbon, Portugal

ENDORSED BY



United Nations
Decade
of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

Improve and integrate SPF knowledge to quantify the impacts of their change and project future trajectories



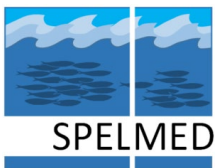
2018

2023



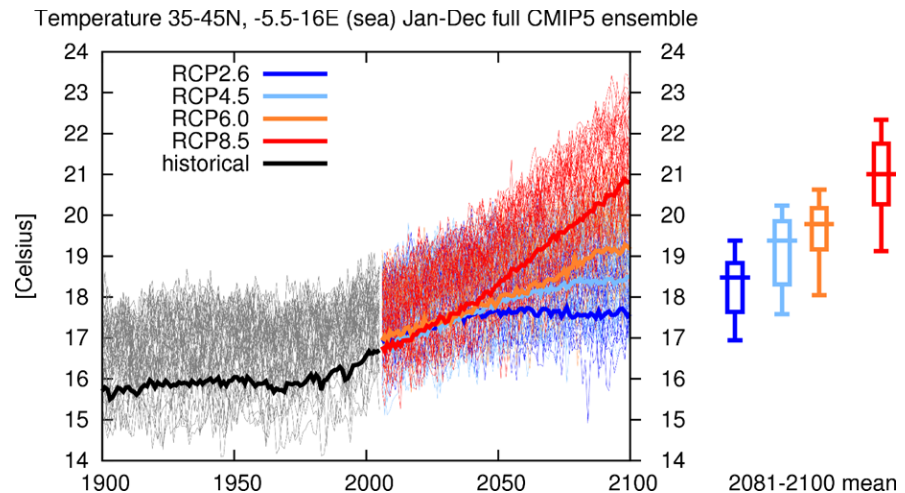
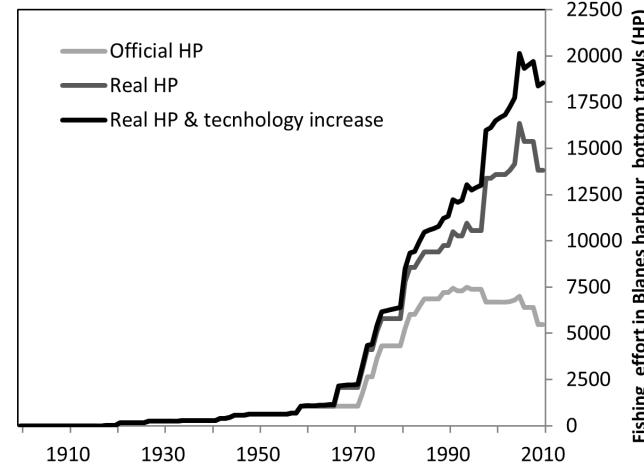
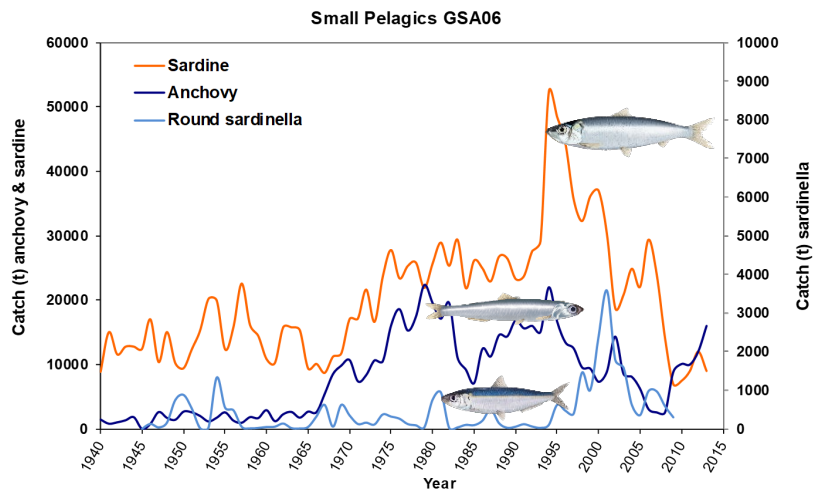
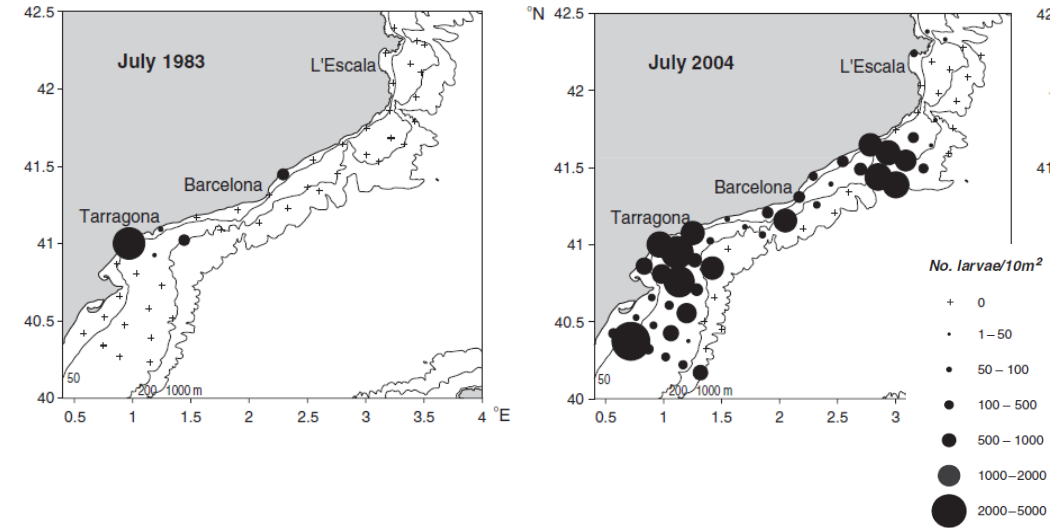
We aimed at

- Identifying **historical changes of small pelagic fish** population traits (e.g. abundance, distribution, body condition, ...);
- Quantifying the **ecological and socio-economic consequences** of the changes in SPF populations on fisheries, iconic predator species, and ecosystem-wide dynamics;
- Analysing **future management options** to achieve resilient and healthy SPF populations and a sustainable exploitation under climate change.



The Western Mediterranean pelagic system is changing

- Declines in commercial species
- Increases and proliferations
- Recoveries
- Changes in climate & ecological conditions
- Changes in human activities



The Western Mediterranean pelagic system is changing

- Anchovy and sardine catches are low
- Pelagic fish shows small sizes
- Proliferations of jellyfish
- Recent recovery of predators

La superpoblación de atunes amenaza las capturas de pescado azul en TGN

Los pescadores exigen medidas para frenar la superpoblación de atunes y que se garantice el futuro del sector

ACN
18/04/2021 17:44 | Actualizado a 18/04/2021 17:44

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La superpoblación de atún rojo deja a los pescadores de Castellón sin sardina y boquerón

Las embarcaciones hablan de "plaga" y piden aumentar las capturas

Elena Aguilar
Castellón | 24-04-21 | 06:01



Poca sardina i seitó petit

La flota d'encerclament del port d'Arenys pateix la crisi del peix captures de sardina i la reducció de la talla del seitó, que en de El govern es compromet a encarregar un estudi per esbrinar-

| Volum de captures de seitó i sardina | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| SEITÓ (quilos) | |
| Arenys de Mar | 2010 501.085 |
| | 2015 941.568 |
| Catalunya | 2010 5.627.584 |
| | 2015 10.150.3 |
| SARDINA (quilos) | |
| Arenys de Mar | 2010 424.918 |
| | 2015 310.729 |
| Catalunya | 2010 4 |
| | 2015 4 |



Pescadores de la barca L'Avi Juanto seleccionan las capturas de pescado azul a su llegada al puerto de Tarragona.

Preocupació per la mida del peix blau, a Palamós

Les barques d'encerclament van tornar ahir a pescar després d'un mes de veda biològica

Es constata un increment de captures però no de talla, com ara en l'anxova



Després de la veda de les barques de peix blau, ara toca a les de la gamba J.T.

Los expertos alertan

Las condiciones del Mediterráneo son idóneas para la proliferación de Medusas este verano

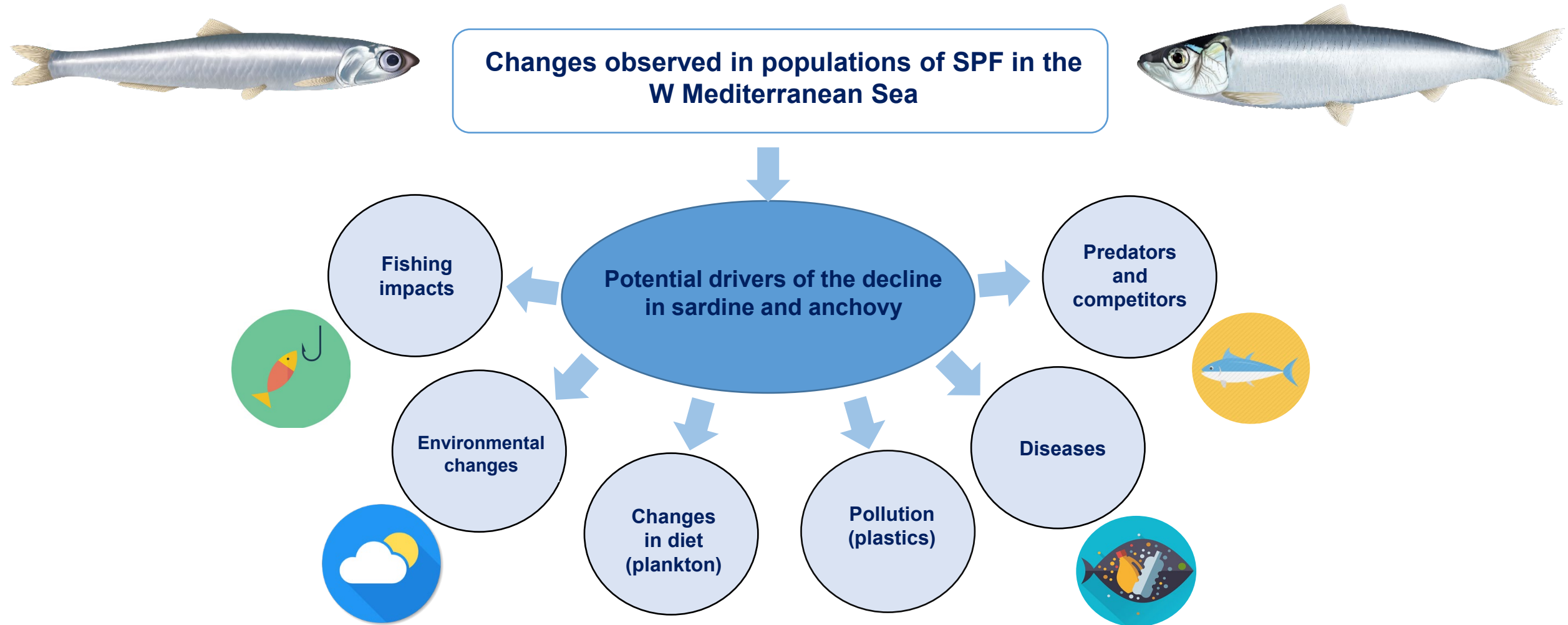
Un invierno cálido y poco lluvioso y un verano caluroso son el caldo de cultivo para que se produzca la invasión de este animal marino



Los expertos han detectado una mayor presencia de medusas en los últimos años en las costas del Mediterráneo (Sebastian Silva / EFE)

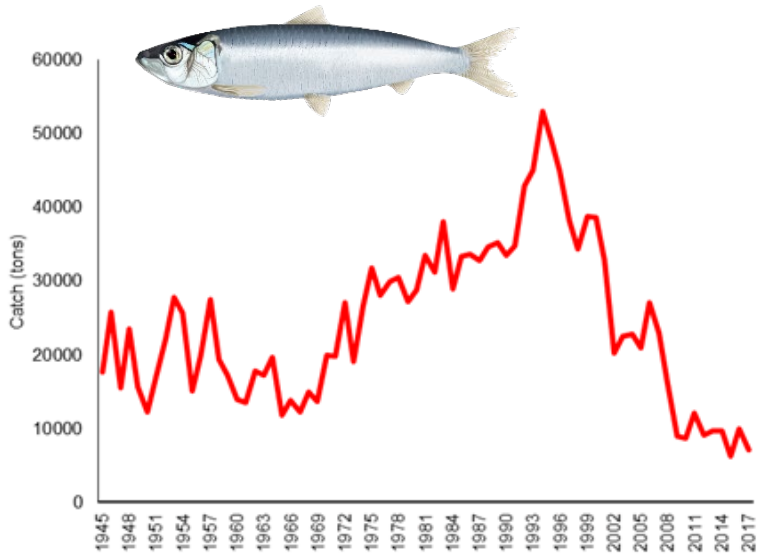
What is happening in the pelagic system?

- Several scientific hypothesis



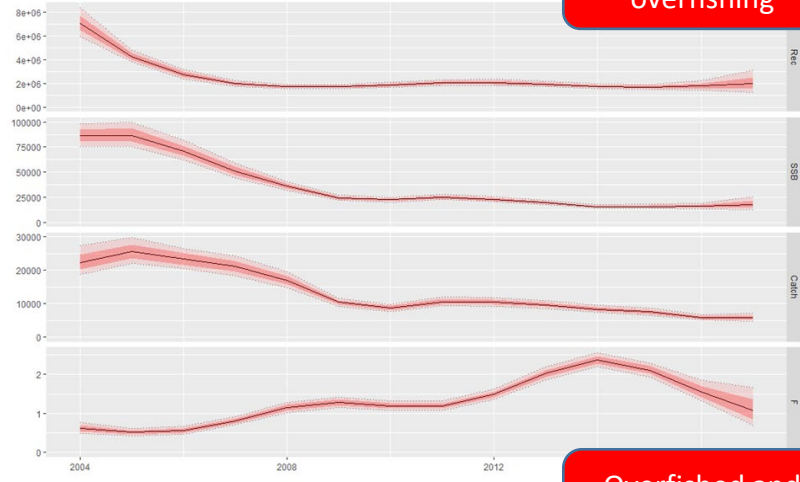
Stock assessments

Fisheries and stock assessments

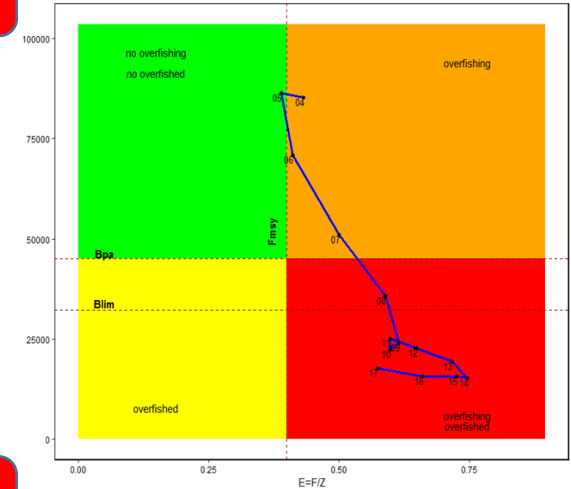


A) Sardine

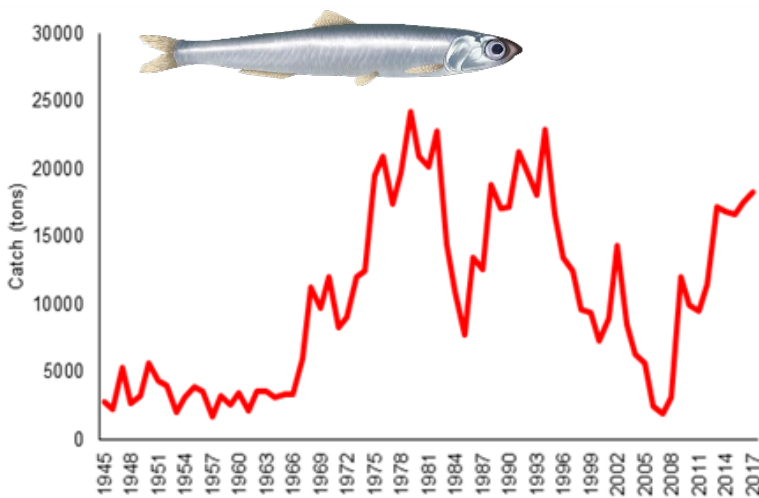
Overfished and overfishing



A4a & two-stage biomass models

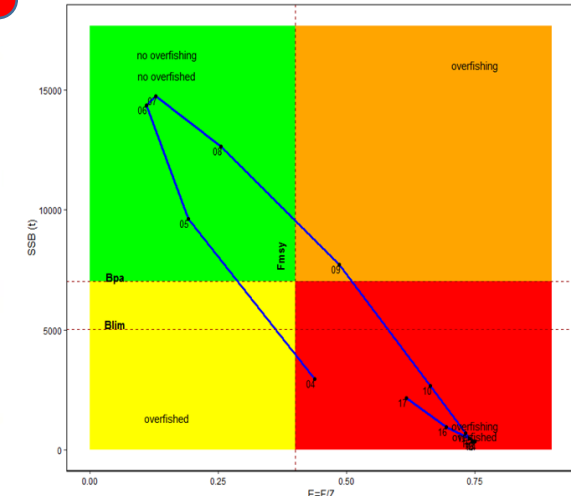
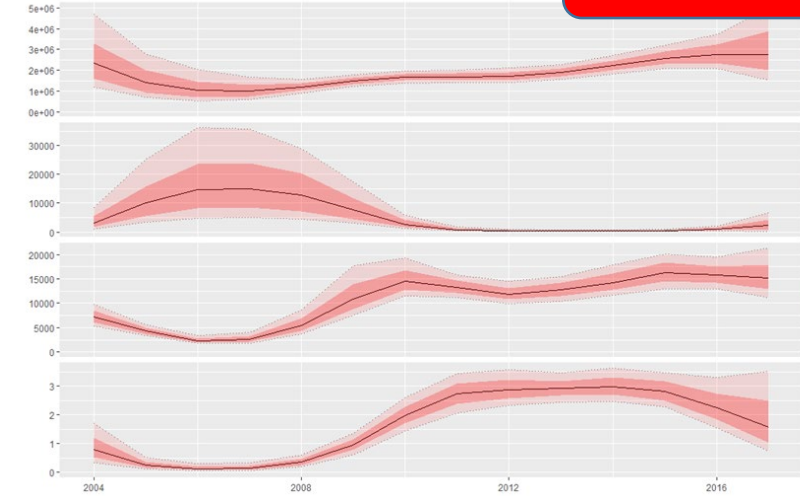


$F_{curr}=1.19$
 $F_{msy}=0.47$



B) Anchovy

Overfished and overfishing



$F_{curr}=0.64$
 $F_{msy}=0.54$

Stock assessments



| |
|---|
| Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) |
| Working Group on Stock Assessment of Small Pelagic Species (WGSASP) |
| Benchmark session for the assessment of sardine and anchovy in GSAs 6 and 7 |
| Online, 18–23 January 2021 |
| REPORT |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

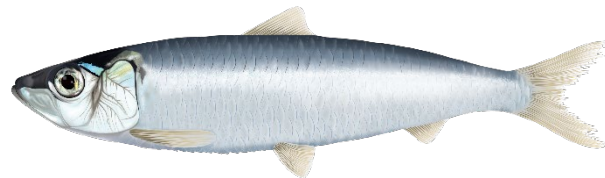
The Working Group on Stock Assessment of Small Pelagic Species (WGSASP) benchmark session for the assessment of sardine and anchovy in geographical subareas (GSAs) 6 and 7¹ was held online through Microsoft Teams on 18–23 January 2021, and continued and finalized online on 9 and 10 February 2021.

The objective of the meeting was to perform full analysis and review the available information and methods used to provide advice on the status of the stocks, focusing on the considerations of old and new data sources as well as old and new (or improved) assessment models and assumptions. The session was attended by a total of 47 experts, including experts from the region and experts on the species and/or on stock assessment models discussed, as well as an external reviewer (Dr Alexandra Silva).

The session investigated all available input data and carried out an analysis of the performance of three different stock assessment methods: FLR assessment for all (a4a) models, surplus production in continuous time (SPiCT) models and two-stage biomass model. After detailed exploration of all available data on life history and fisheries, it was decided that the two GSAs should be treated separately as evidences on possible changes on growth parameters along time series for both species are highlighted. Finally, sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*) in GSA 6 and anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) in GSAs 6 and 7 were assessed using a4a. Additional assessments were performed on sardine in GSA 6 and anchovy in GSAs 6 and 7 using SPiCT. Sardine in GSA 7 was assessed using a two-stage biomass model. Sardine in GSAs 6 and 7 as well as anchovy in GSA 7 were benchmarked. Anchovy in GSA 6 was assessed providing qualitative advice. The group decided to keep the benchmark open and ongoing in order to assess improvements in data and finalize it within the following year in the presence of an external reviewer.

Sardine in GSAs 6 & 7 as well as anchovy in GSA 7 were benchmarked
 Anchovy in GSA 6 was assessed providing qualitative advice

In 2019



GSA06



In overexploitation

a4a, SpiCT

In overexploitation

a4a, SpiCT

GSA07



Ecologically unbalanced

Two-stage biomass model, acoustic estimates

Low biomass

Acoustic estimates

Important information gaps

- Species differentiation - **Genetics**
- Species health - **Biology**
 - Body condition, reproduction, growth and mortality
 - Distribution and abundance
 - Environmental factors and preferences
- Species roles and drivers - **Ecology**
 - Trophic behaviour
 - Contaminants
 - Predators and competitors
 - Fisheries
- Species changes and their consequences – **Socio-ecology**
 - Changes in ecosystem components
 - Changes in fisheries
 - Projections (fisheries and CC) and management options



Engraulis encrasicolus – European anchovy



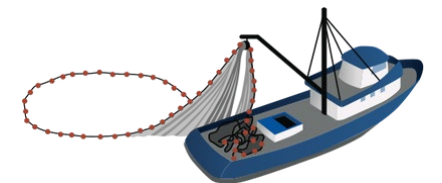
Sardina pilchardus – European sardine



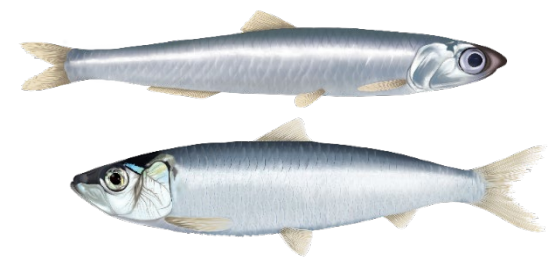
Sardinella aurita – round sardinella



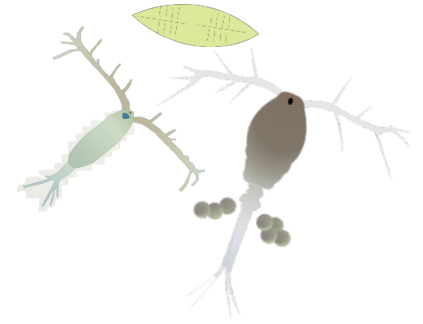
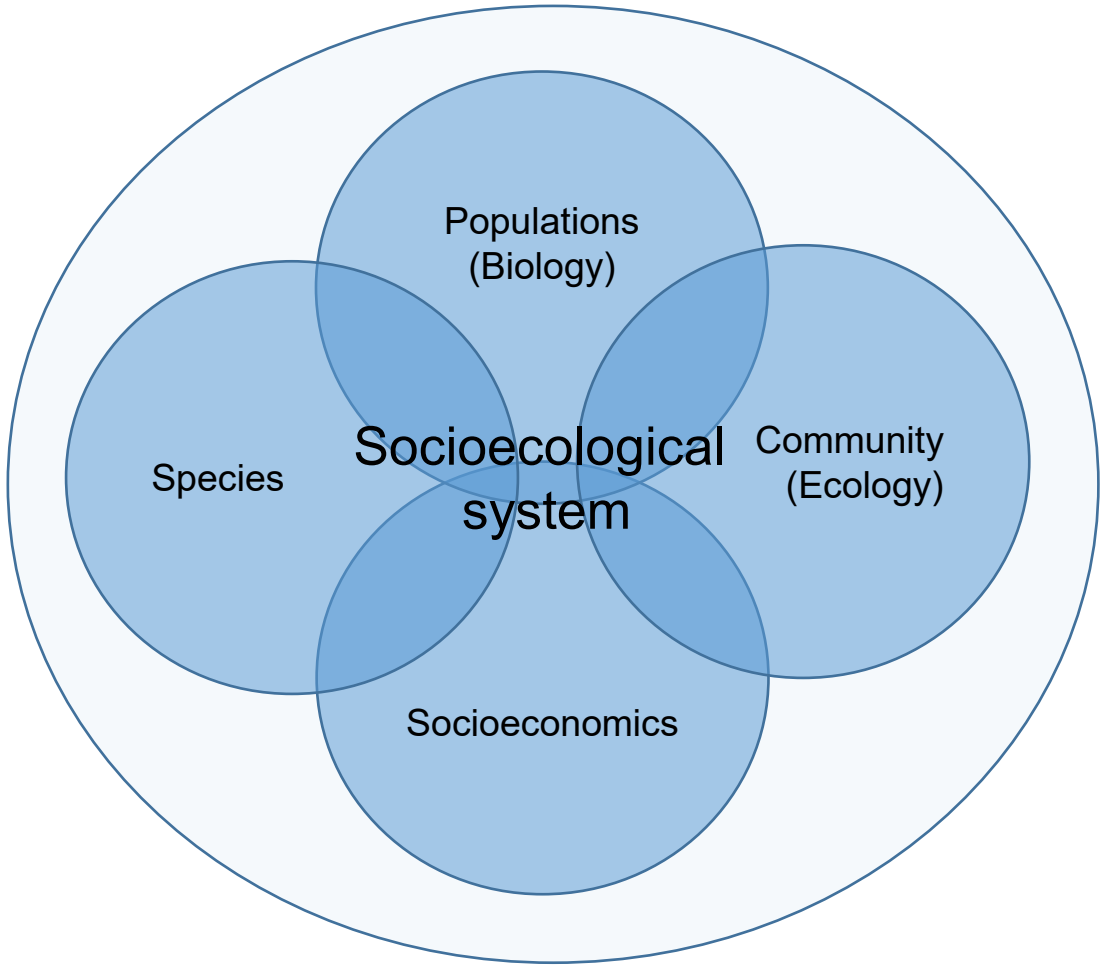
Euthynnus alletteratus - little tunny



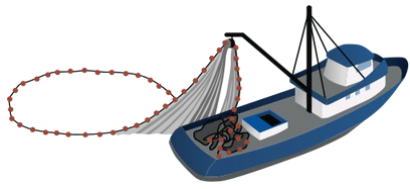
Body conditions, reproduction
Growth, mortality
Environmental factors, distribution & abundance



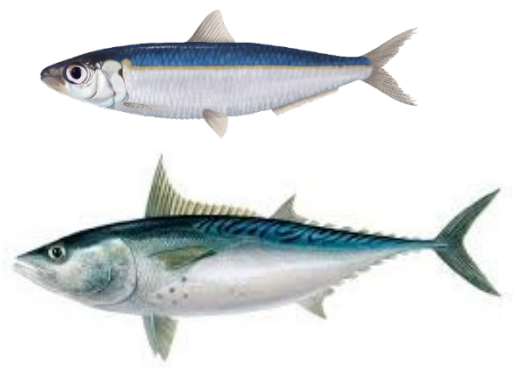
Population structure



Trophic ecology
Predators, competitors



Fishing dynamics, trade-offs
Catch, effort





Literature review

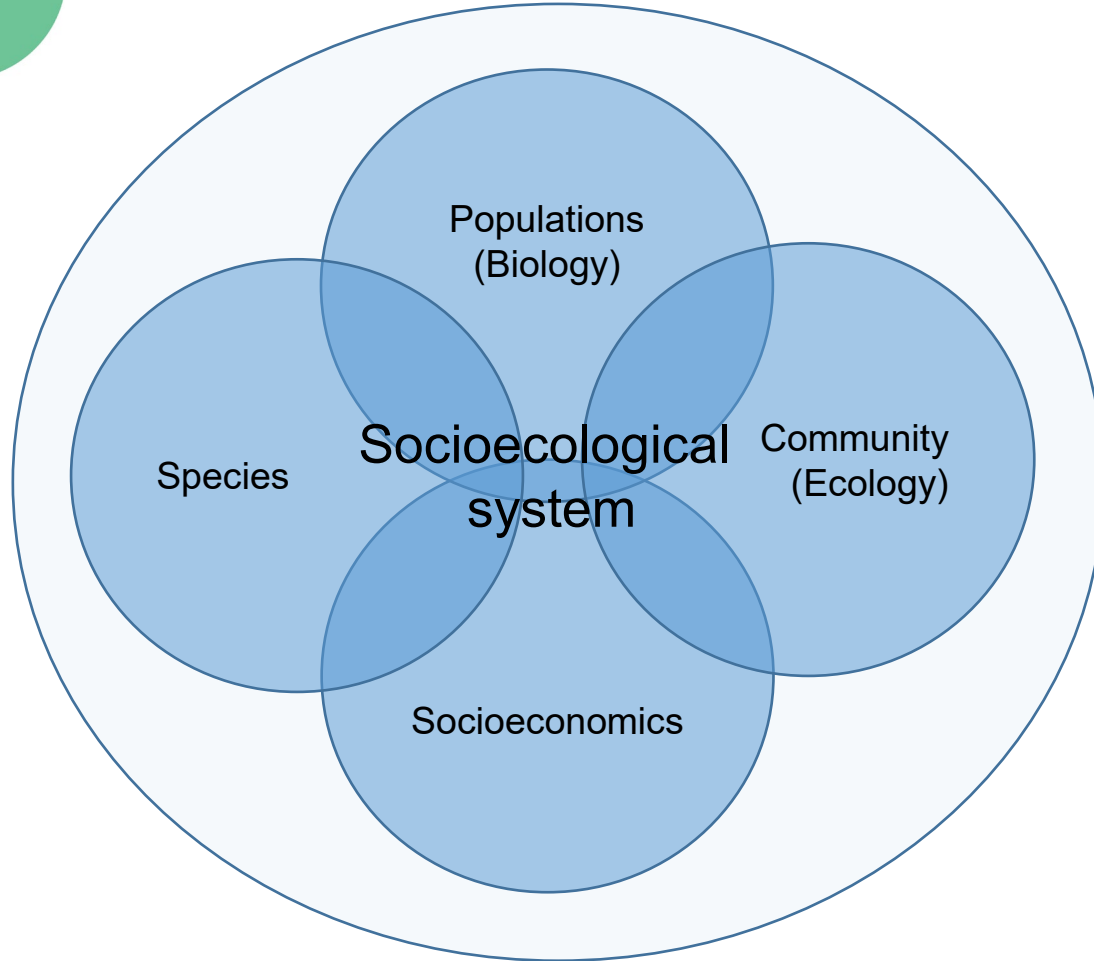
Oceanographic campaigns
fishing-dependent data

Population structure

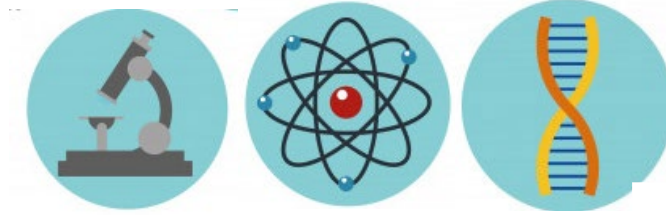


Integrated analyses

Body conditions, reproduction
Growth, mortality
Environmental factors, distribution & abundance



Fishing dynamics, trade-offs
Catch, effort



Dissections
Laboratory analyses, Calorimeter
SIA, SCA, Metabarcoding
Barcoding

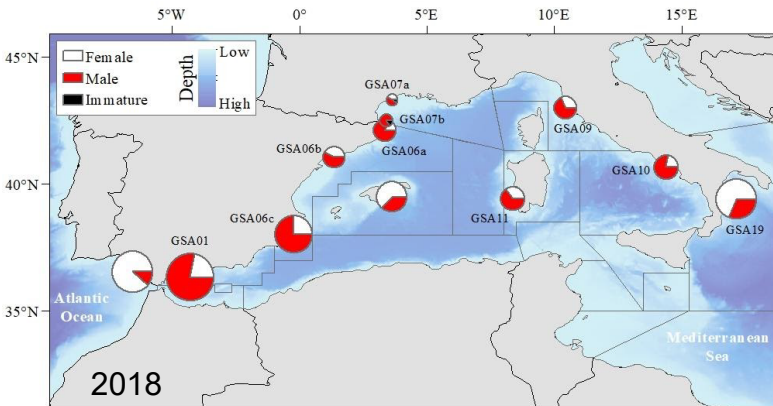
Trophic ecology
Predators, competitors



Statistical modelling
Mechanistic modelling

Species differentiation - Genetics

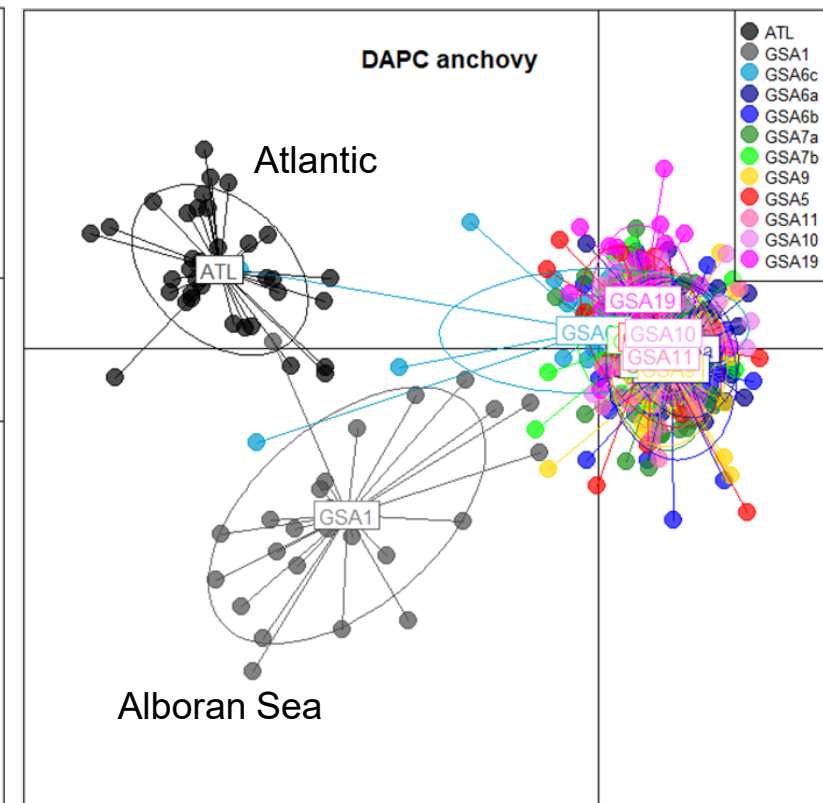
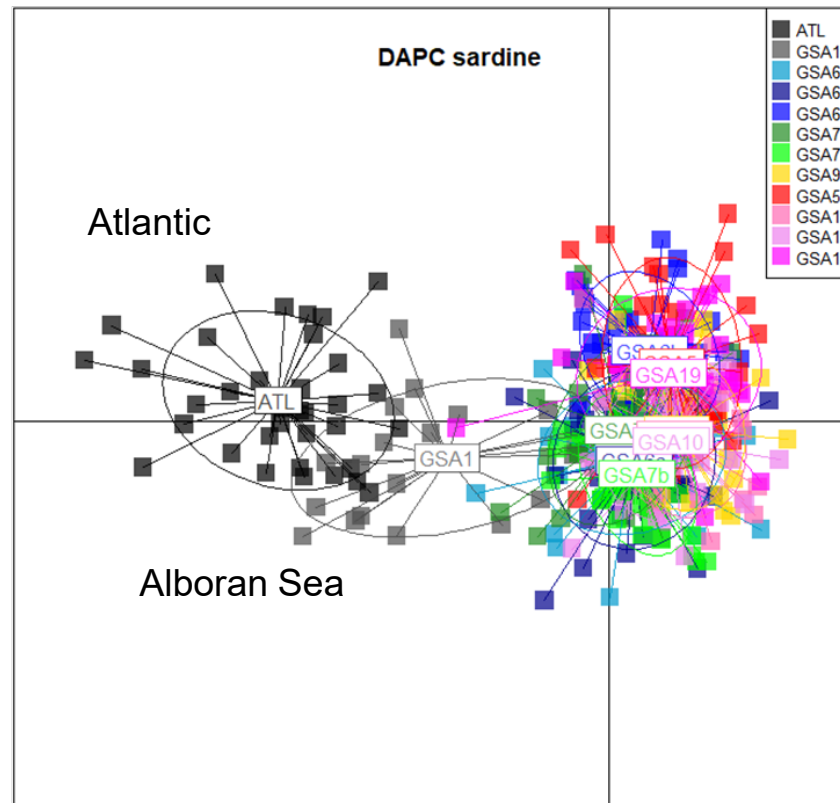
Low differentiation between populations in the Mediterranean Sea



Population structure:
Genotyping through high-throughput sequencing (ddRAD libraries, SNPs)



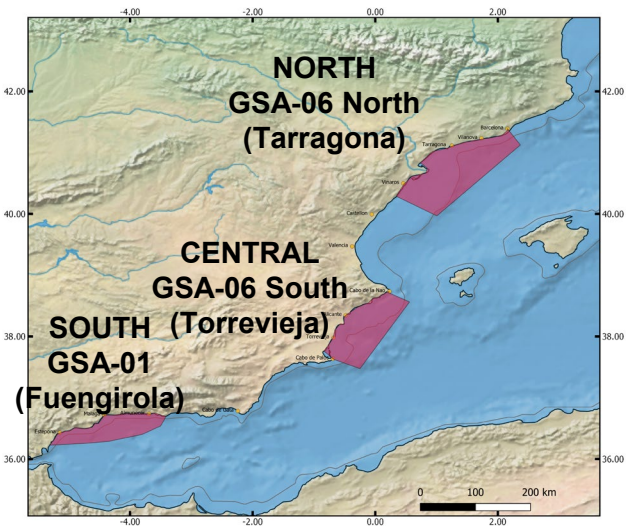
Seascape genomics:
Genome-environmental patterns associated with neutral and adaptive genetic variation



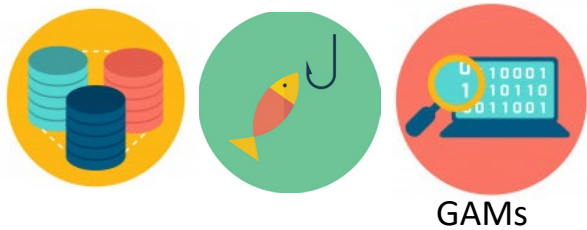


Species health

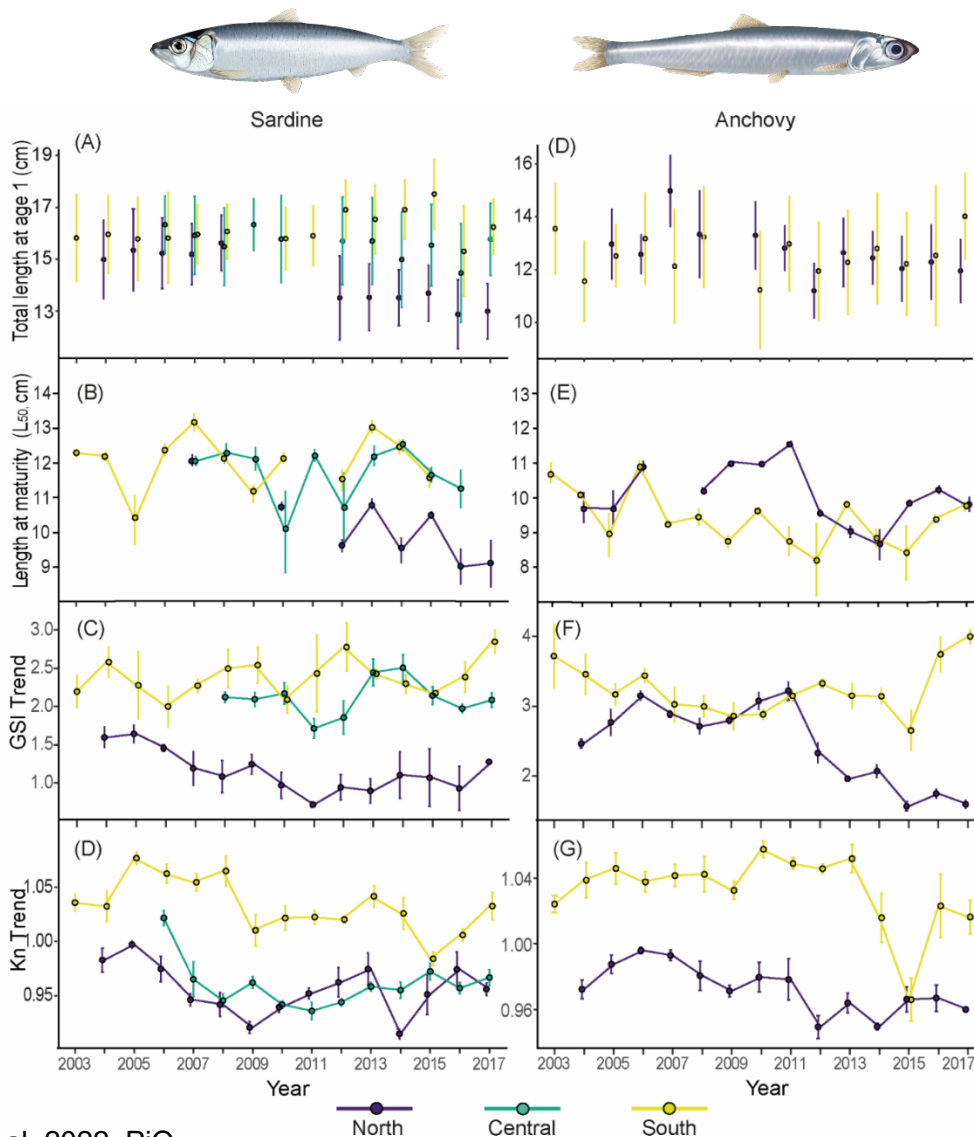
Changes in body condition, reproduction, growth and energy



Monthly time-series of biological parameters from 2003-2017



GAMs



Evaluated the seasonal and inter-annual variability of key life-history traits along a latitudinal gradient and related changes to potential environmental variability and trophic conditions

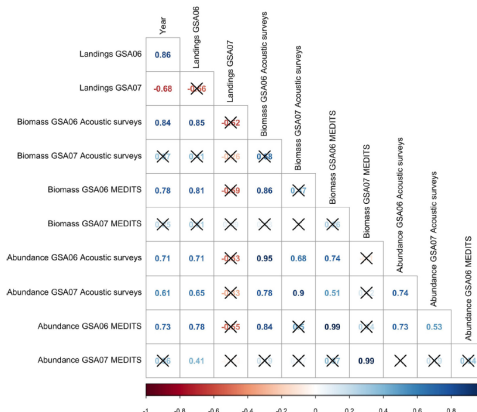
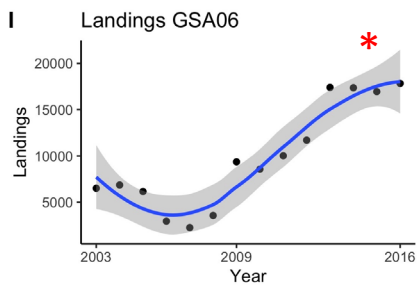
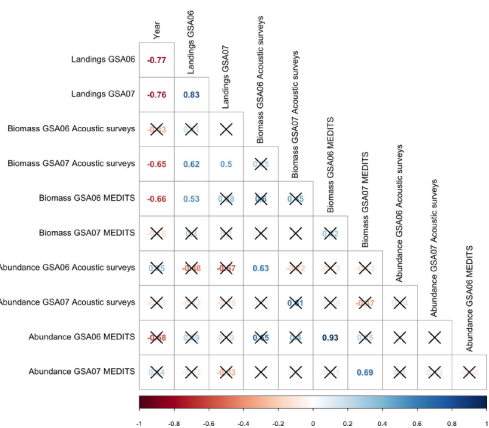
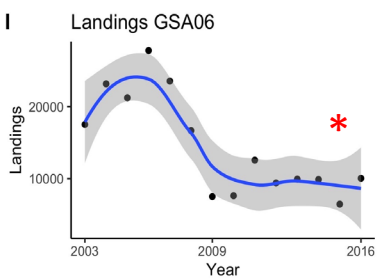
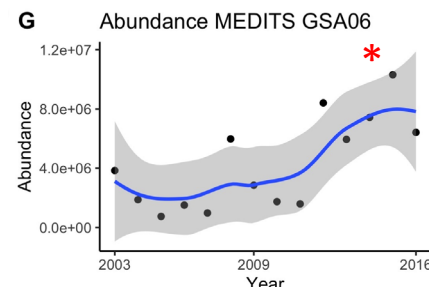
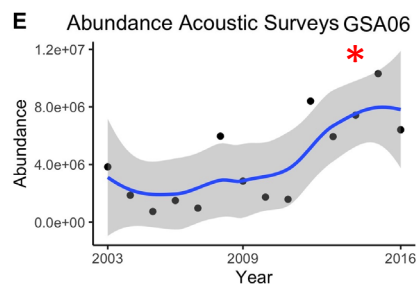
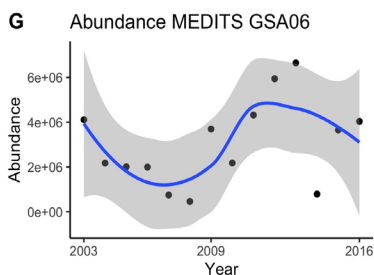
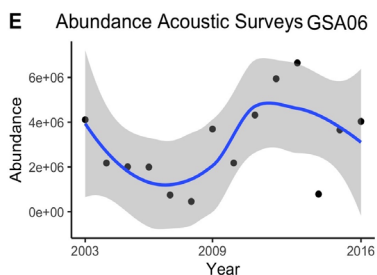
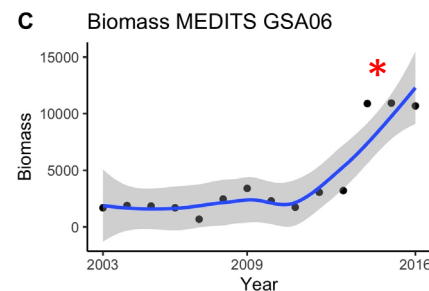
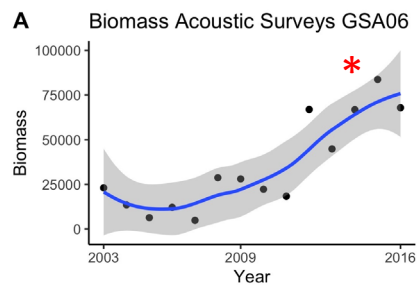
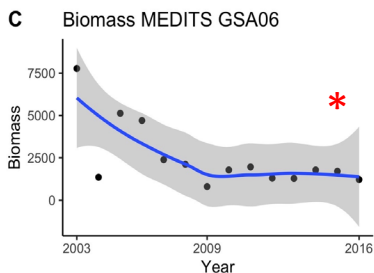
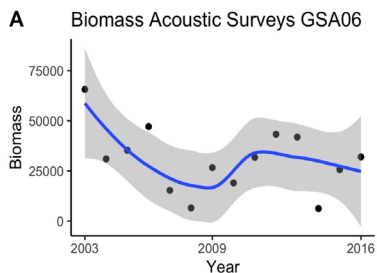
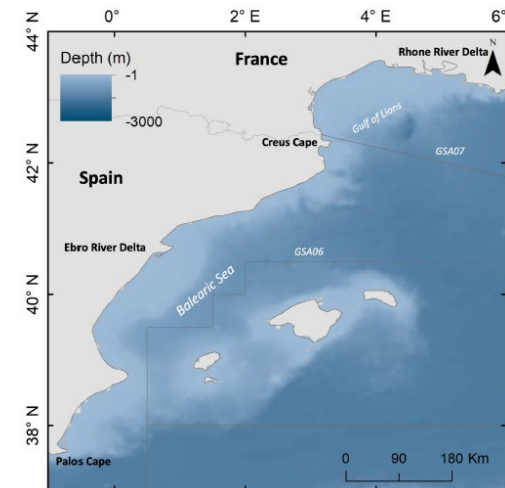
Fish price
Shorter crisis

Small size

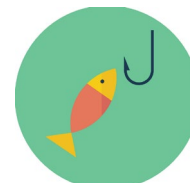
No sardina
Area specific

Species health

Changes in abundance, biomass

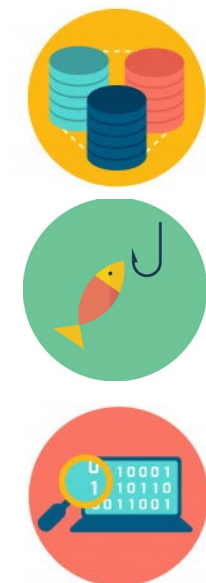
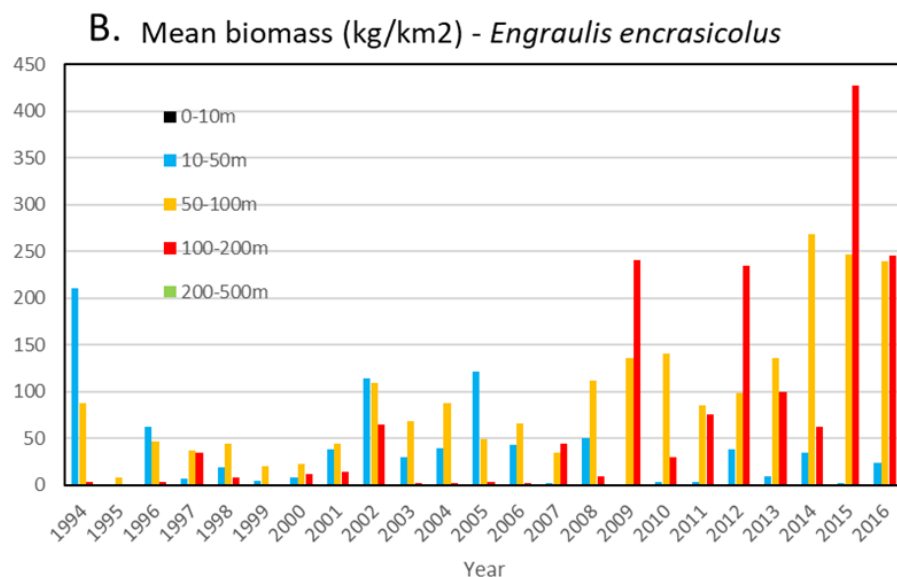
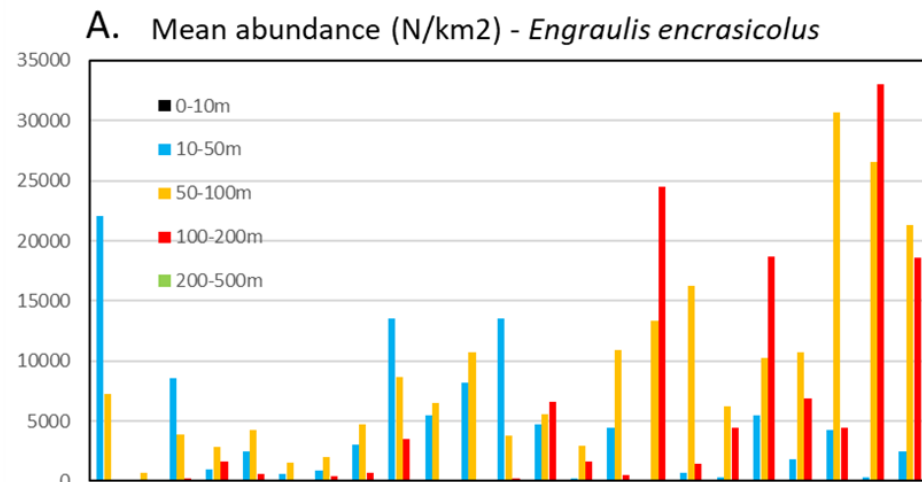
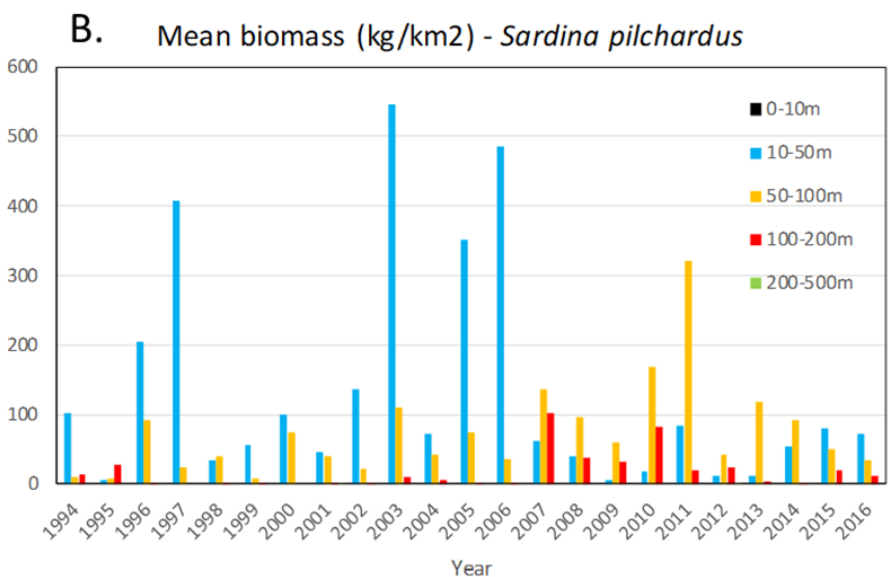
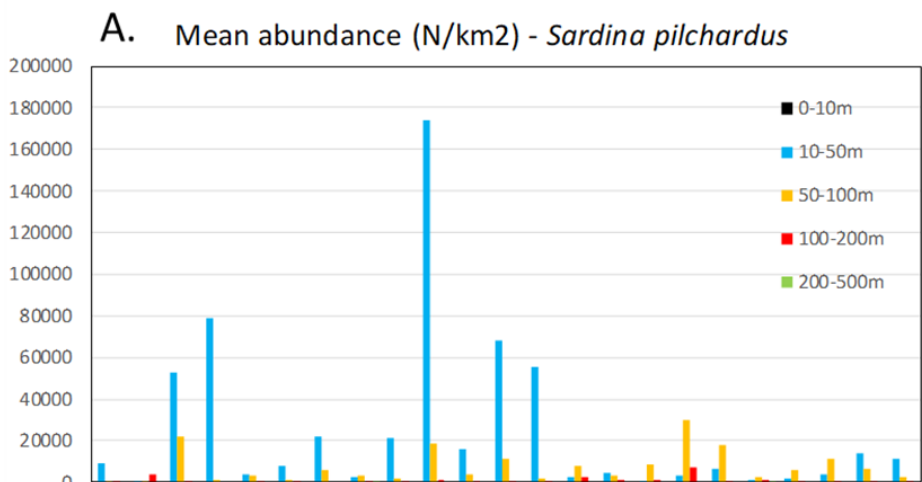


Spearman's correlation



Species health

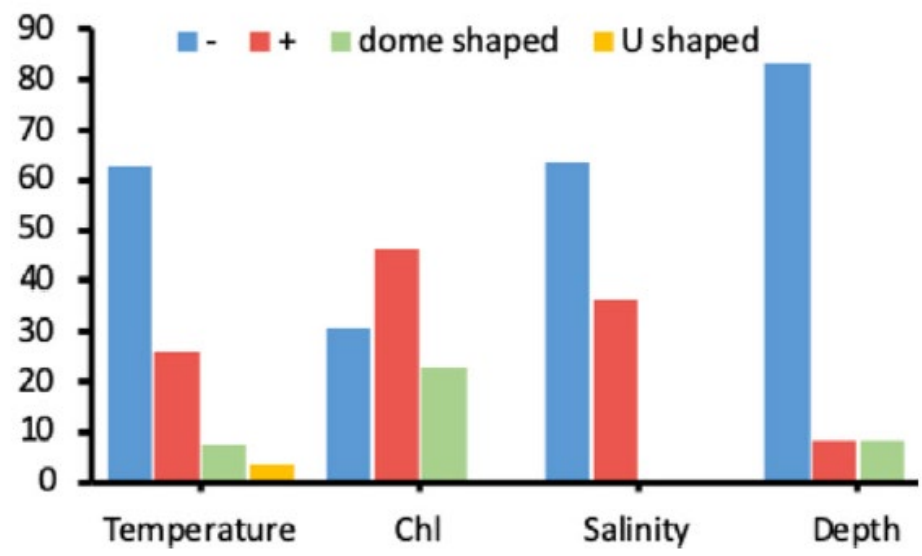
Changes in distributions



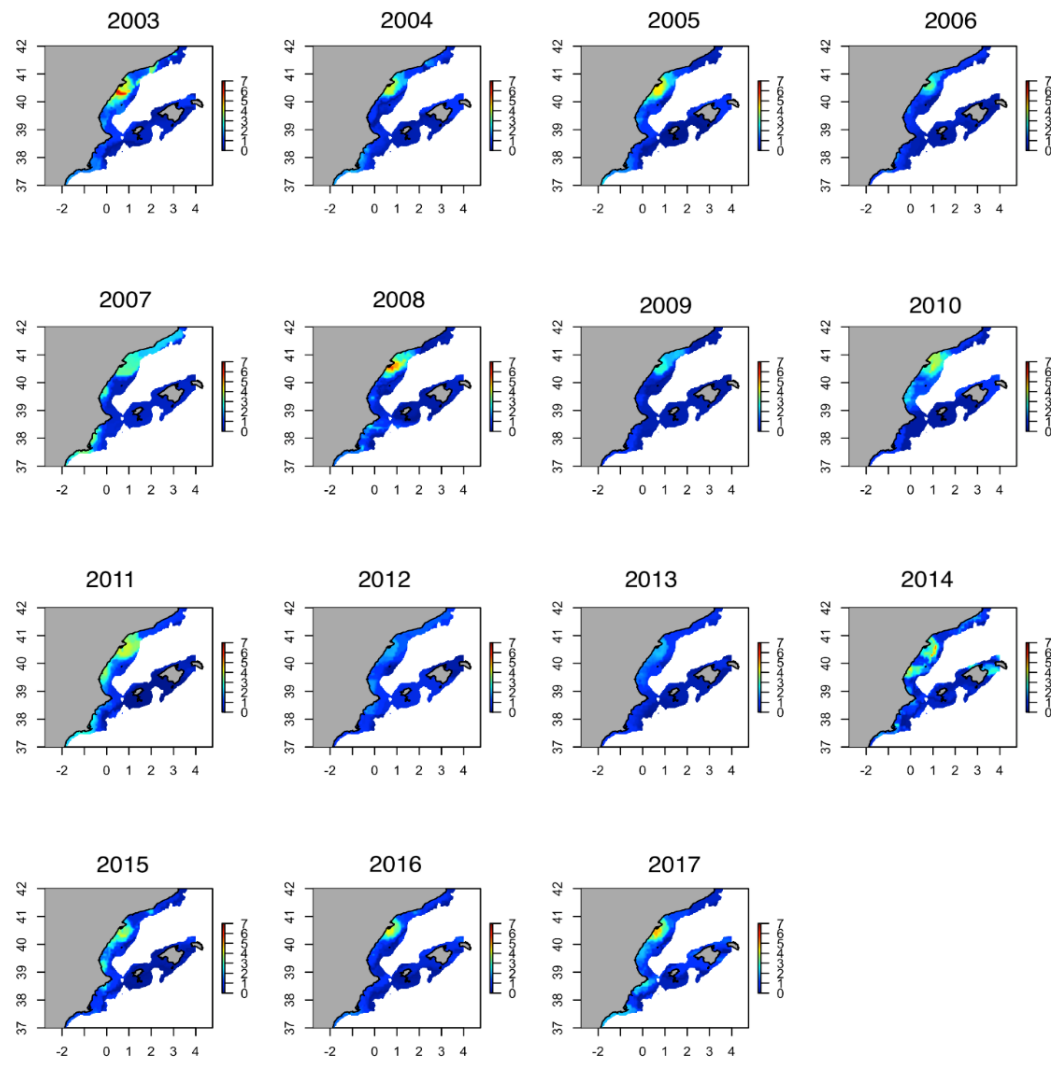


Species health

Changes in distributions & environmental factors and preferences



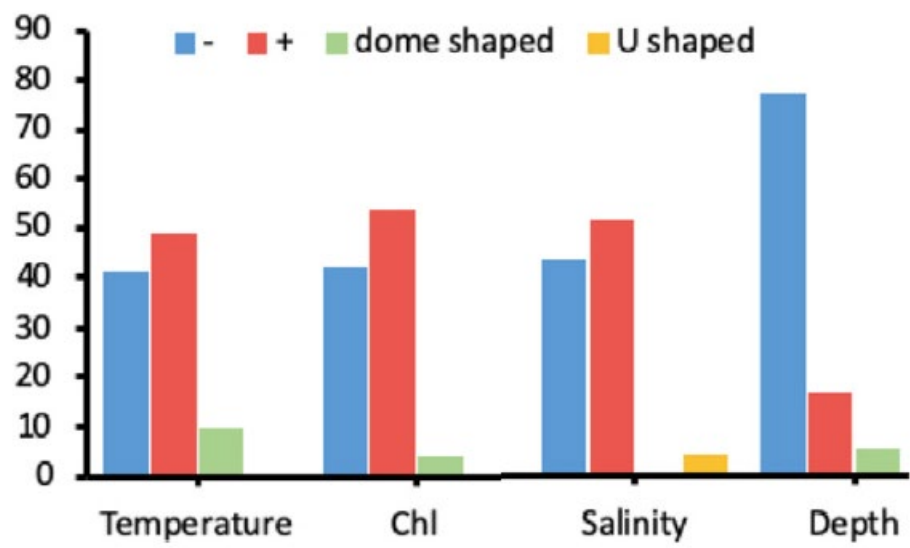
Boosted Regression Trees



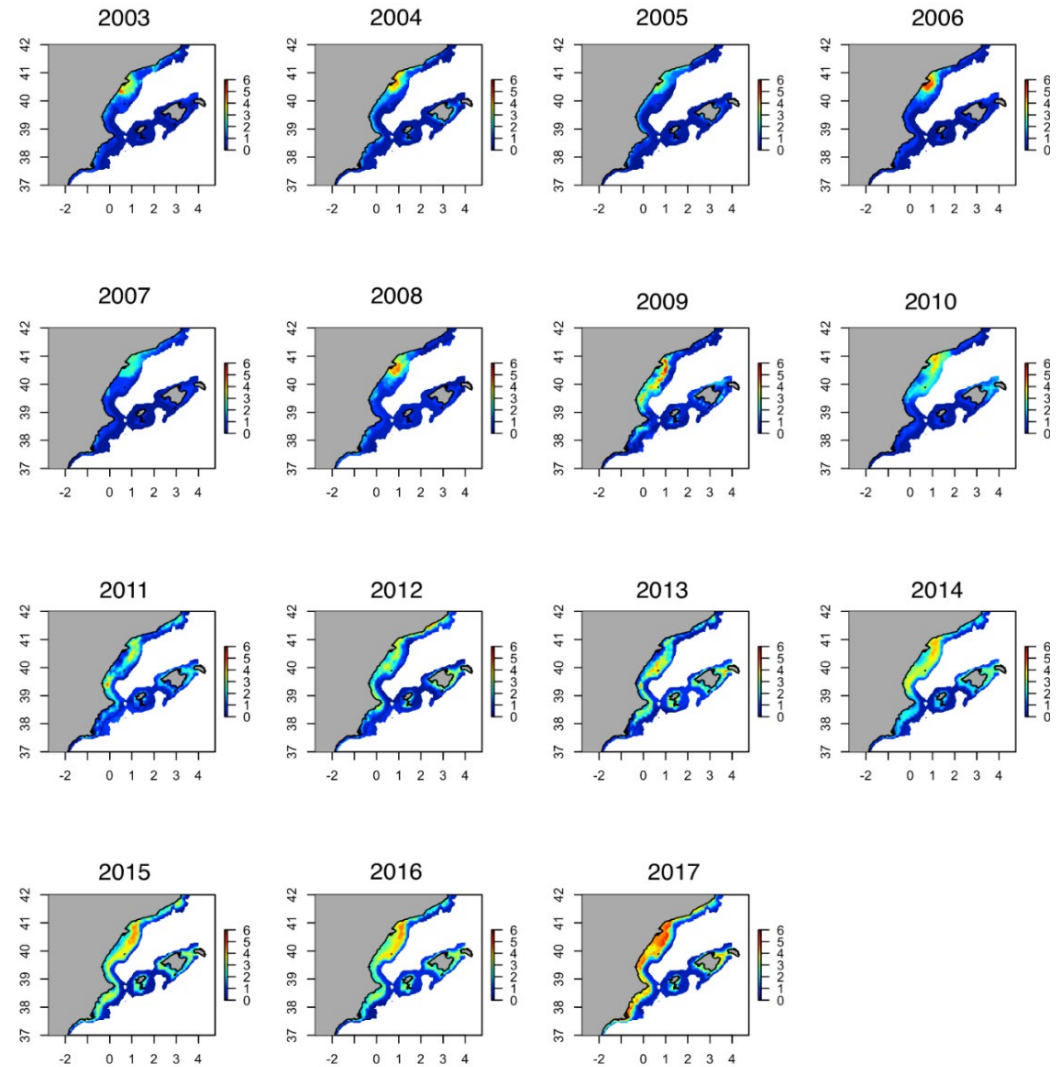


Species health

Changes in distributions & environmental factors and preferences



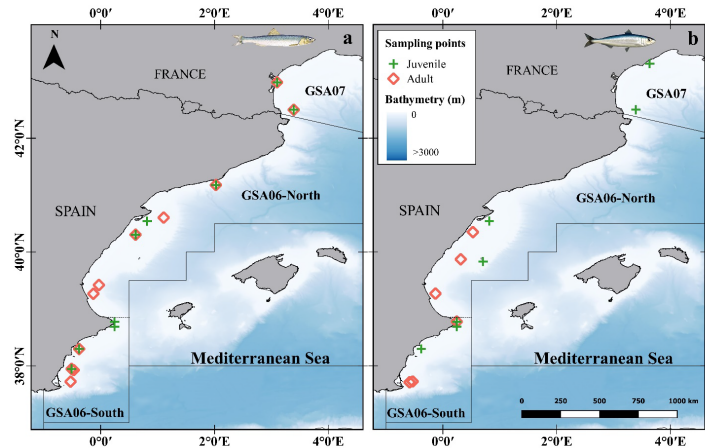
Boosted Regression Trees



Species roles and drivers



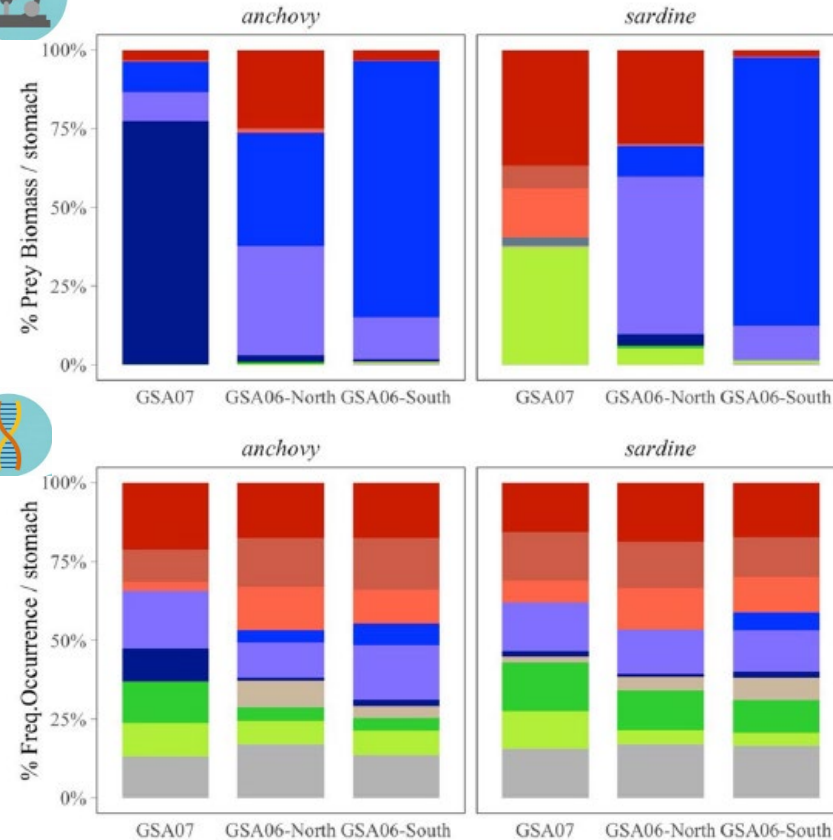
Trophic behaviour along a latitudinal gradient



Stomach contents

DNA-metabarcoding

Stable isotopes



SCA: opportunistic ingestion of available prey in a certain area and/or time.

DNA-M: Ingested prey reflect a latitudinal signal that may indicate a higher large prey ingestion by both species southwards, and more effective predation on large prey like krill by anchovy

SIA: lower $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ in the northernmost area.

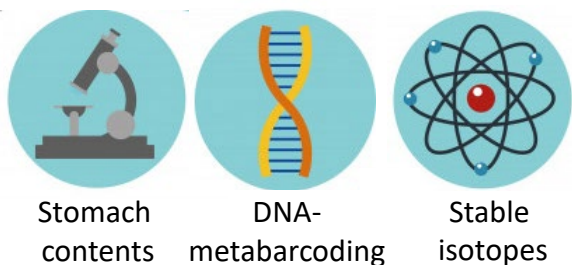
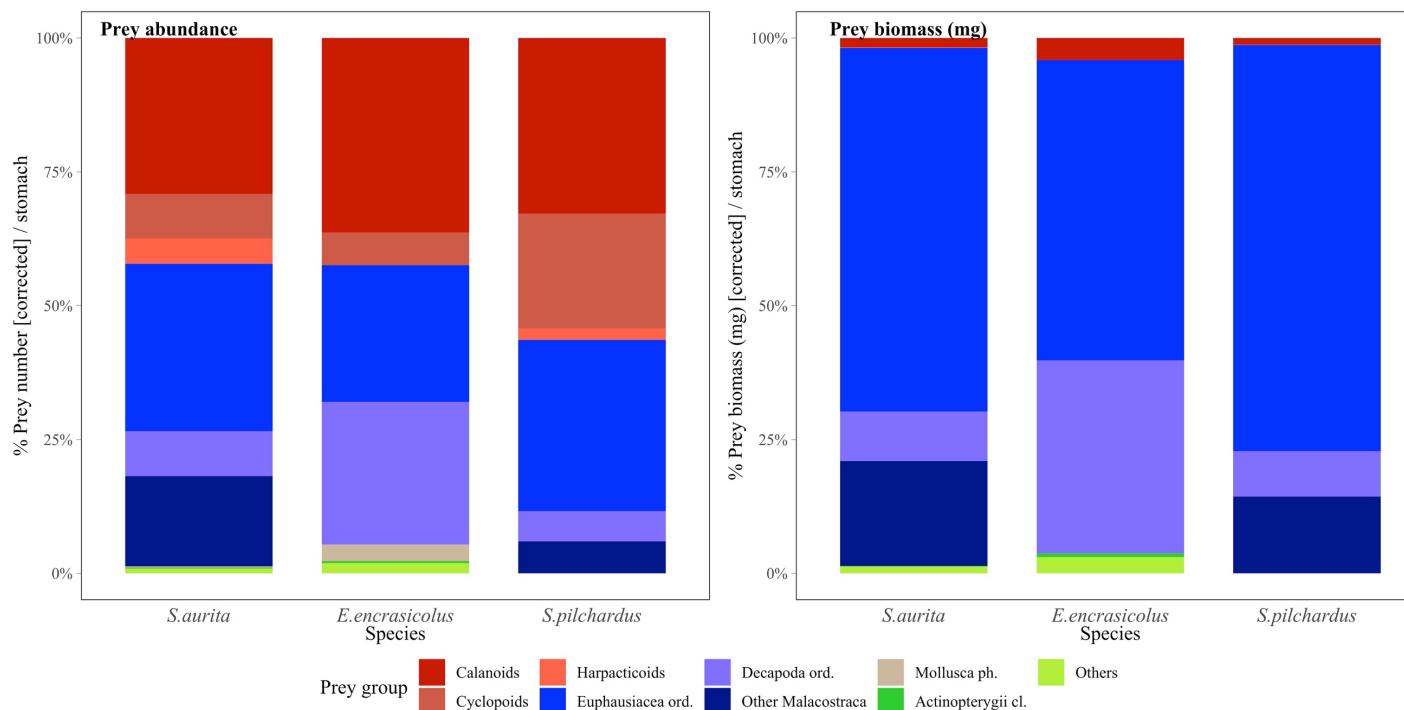
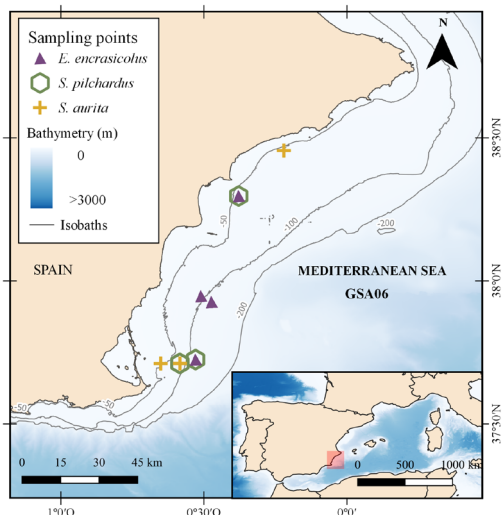
- Calanoids
- Euphausiacea ord.
- Crustacean remains
- Actinopterygii cl.
- Cyclopoids
- Decapoda ord.
- Mollusca ph.
- Others
- Harpacticoids
- Other Malacostraca
- Cladocerans

A latitudinal gradient indicating changes in the trophic ecology of anchovy and sardine coinciding with described better biological conditions for fish in the south

Species roles and drivers



Trophic behaviour along a latitudinal gradient (competitors)

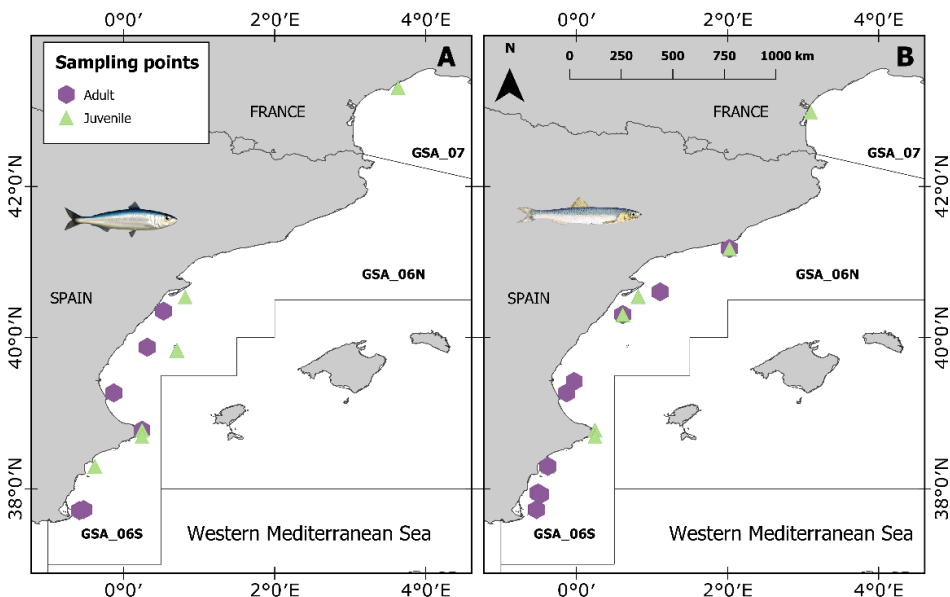


- Predation on relatively large krill is equally important for sardinella, anchovy & sardine;
- Effective use of food resources by sardinella, being able to predate in gelatinous org.;
- An important overlap is found in their isotopic niche, especially with anchovy, using nitrogen ($\delta^{15}\text{N}$) and carbon ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$) stable isotopes in muscle tissue.

Species roles and drivers



Contaminants (microplastics, plasticizers) and parasites



M. Albo



Ingestion of microplastic in the European sardine and anchovy in the northwestern Mediterranean sea



The microplastics incidence in the gastrointestinal tracts for sardine was 58% and 60% for anchovy



Among several physiological, environmental and spatial variables the abundance of microplastics ingested was more influenced by latitude (+) and relative body condition (-) for sardine, and GSI index (+) total fish length (-) for anchovy



Parasite prevalence (trematode larvae and nematodes) was positive related with the abundance of microplastic in both species



Areas with the highest probabilities of microplastics ingestion were the Gulf of Alicante (Spain) for sardine and Gulf of Lions (France) for anchovy



Sardinella showed larger concentrations of parasites and plastics

Species roles and drivers



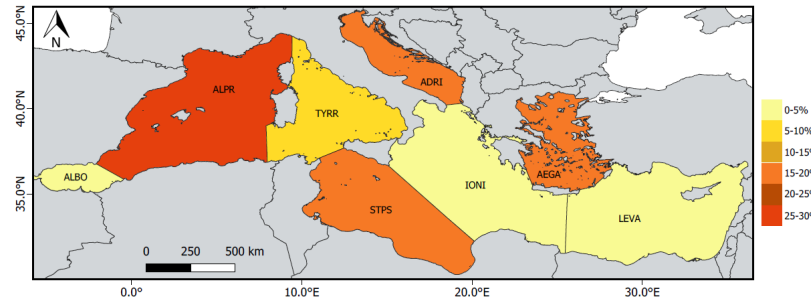
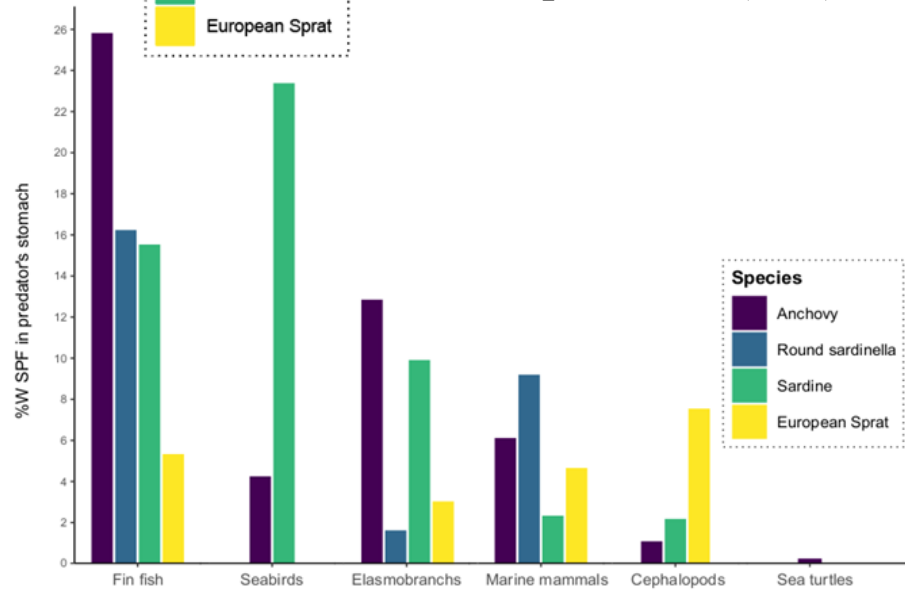
Trophic ecology of predators



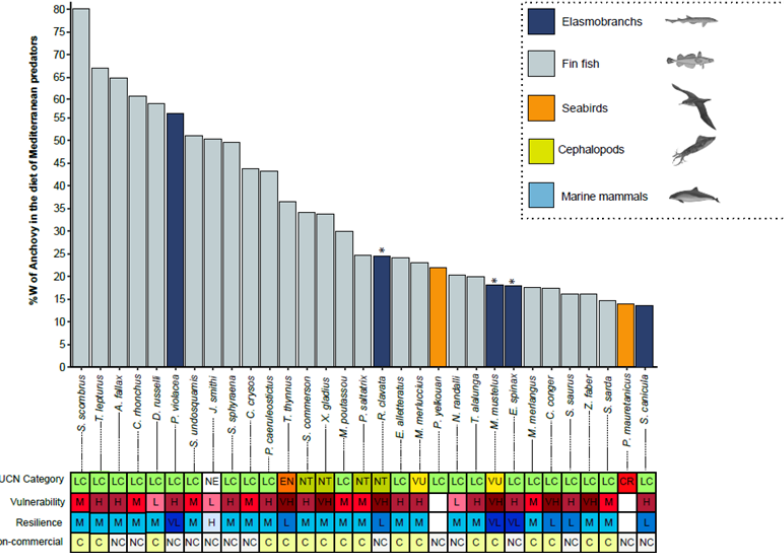
1961-2019



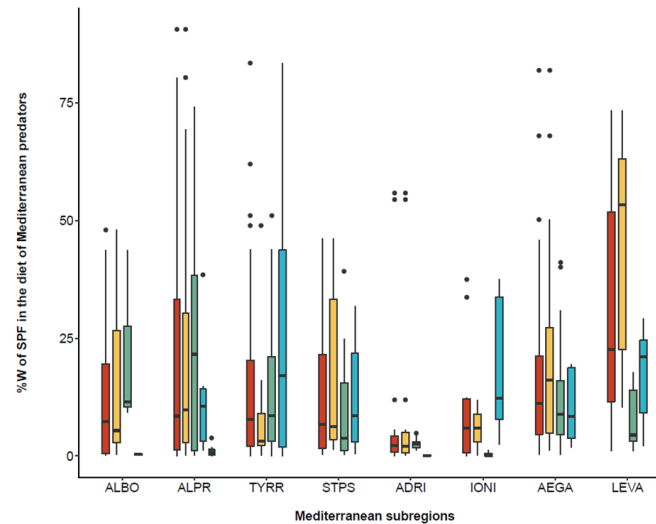
101 studies
79 predators (%W)
98 predators (%N)



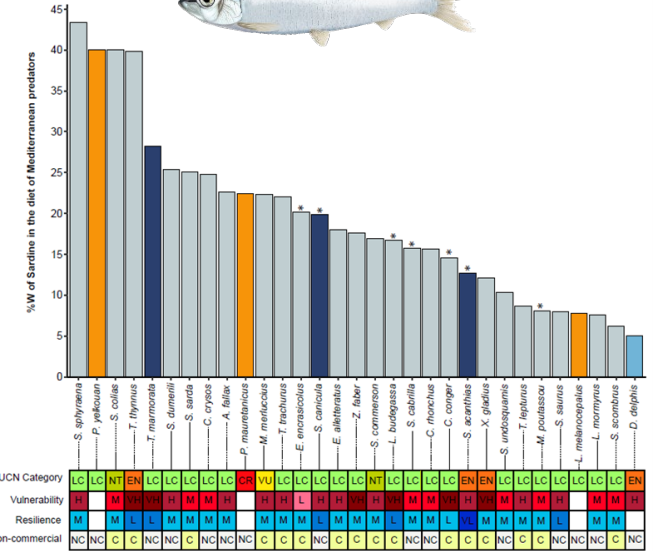
Anchovy



Sardine



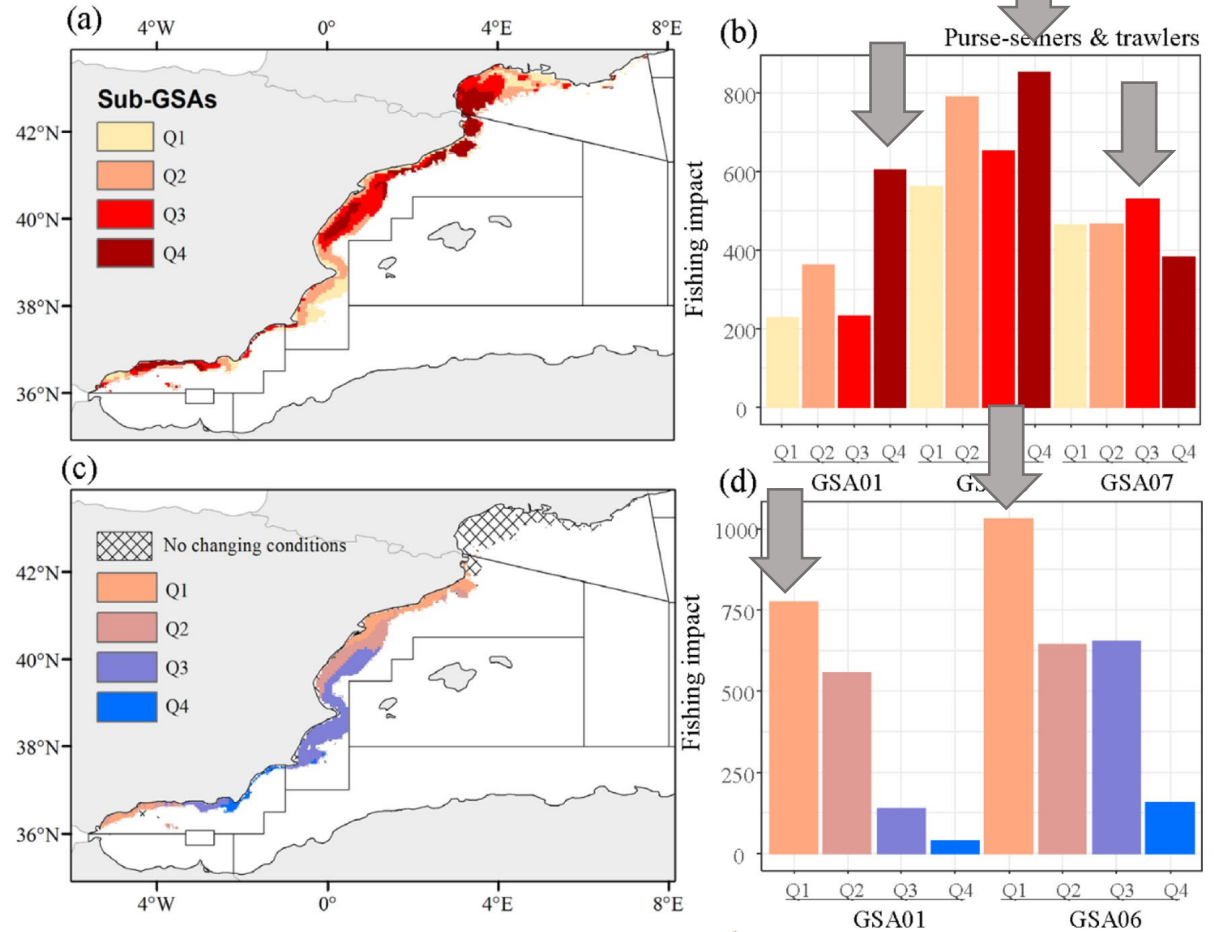
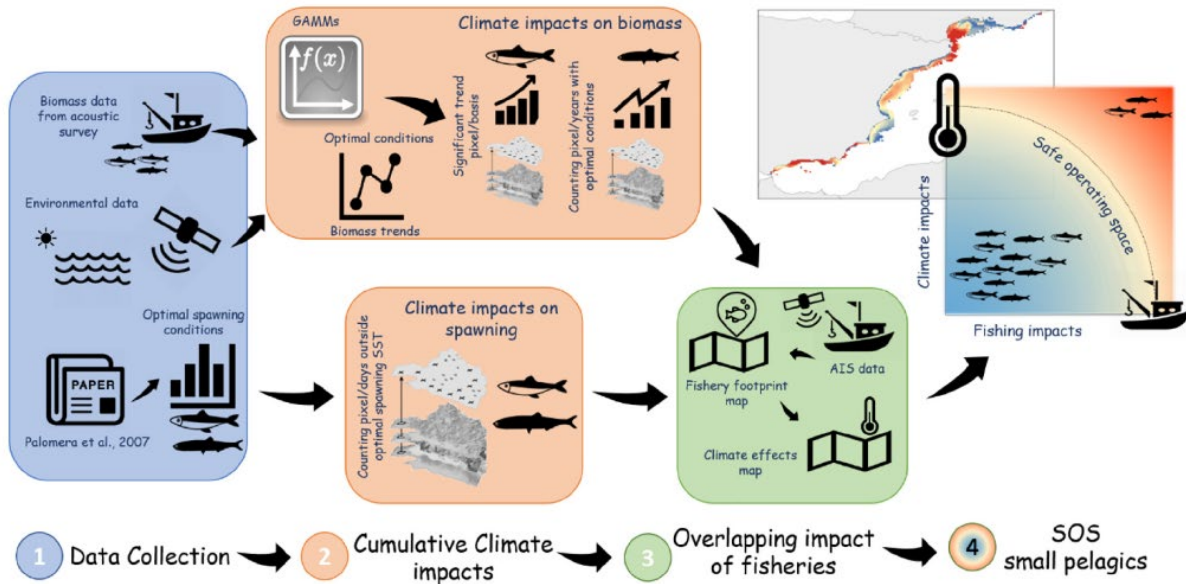
Sardine



Species roles and drivers

Fisheries and environmental factors and preferences

“Safe Operating Space” (SOS)
by Rockström et al. (2009)

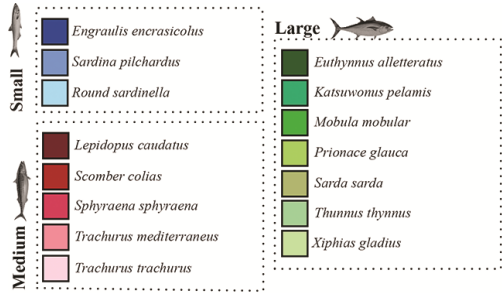


Identification of areas with larger cumulative impacts show as well a latitudinal gradient

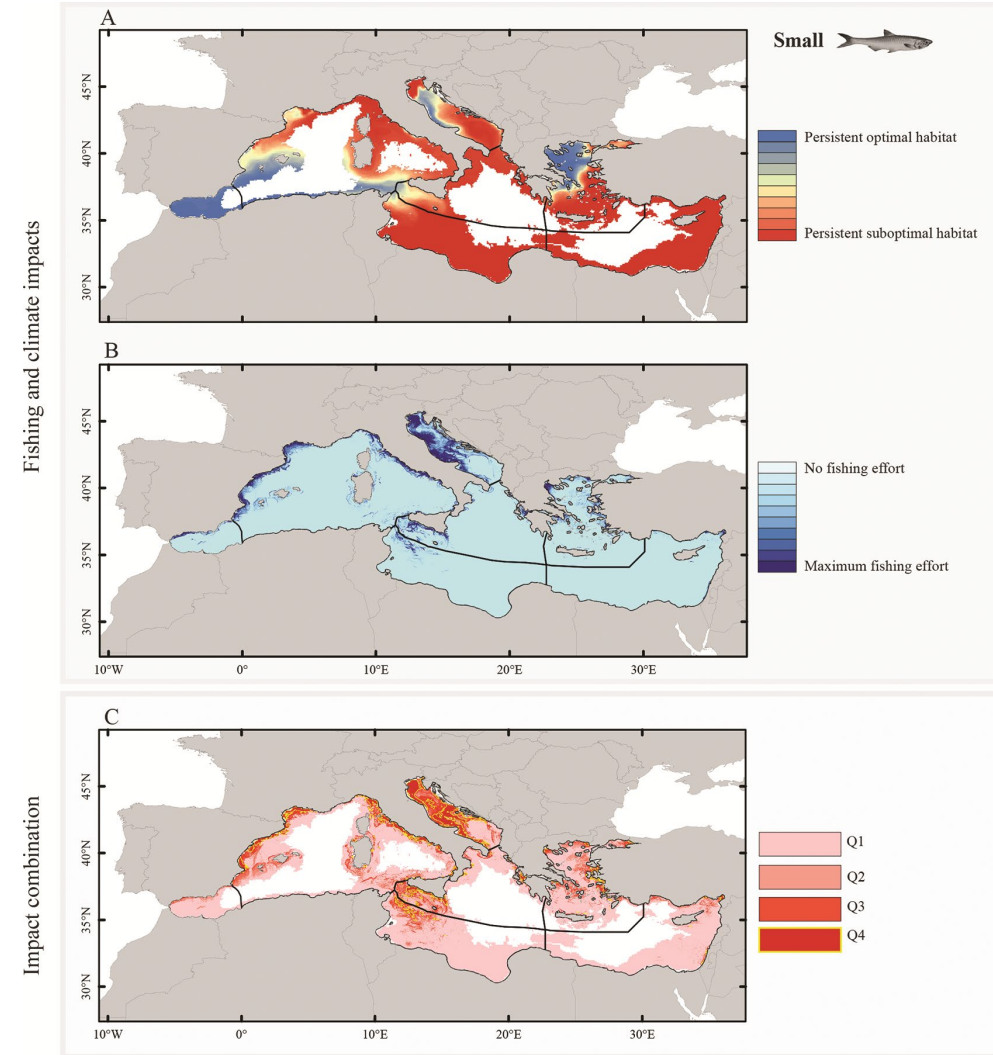
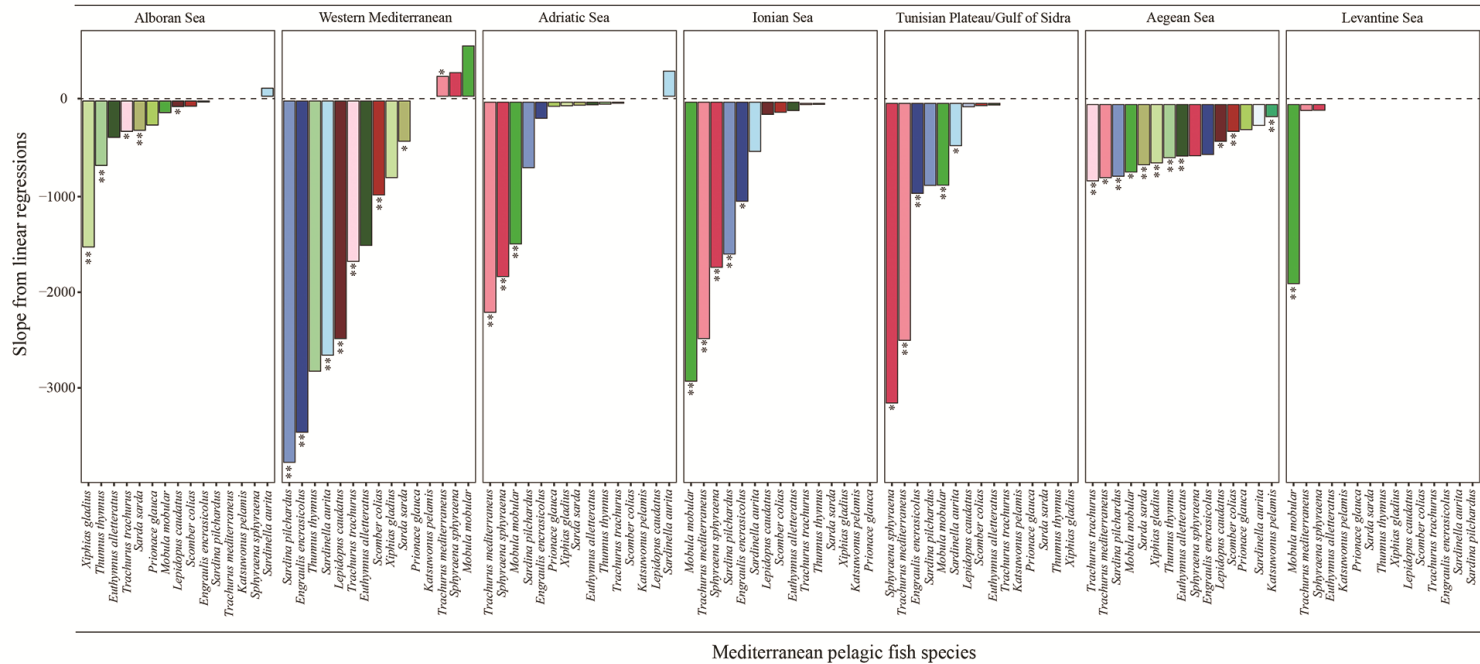
Species roles and drivers



Fisheries and environmental factors and preferences

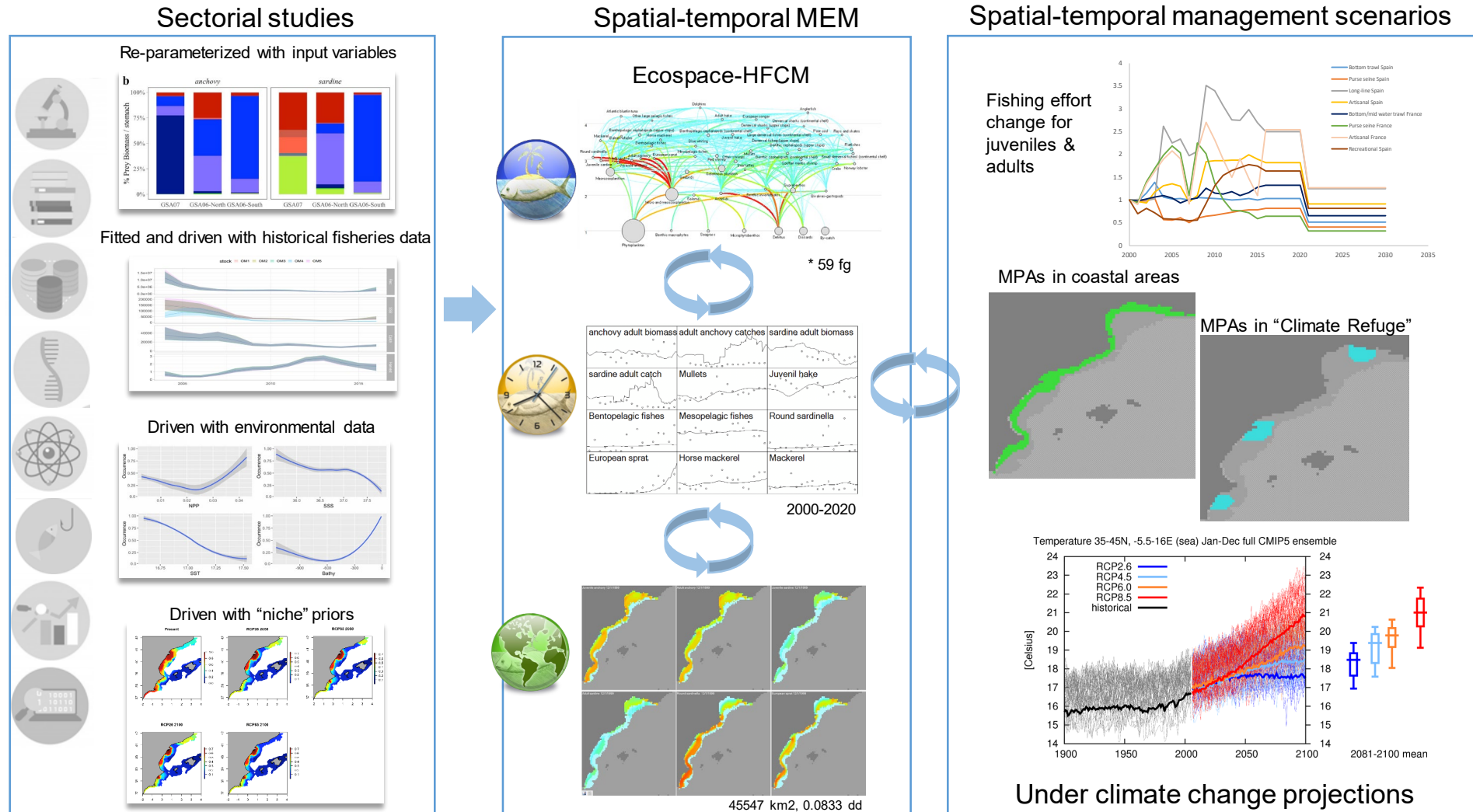


Mediterranean marine ecoregions



Species changes and their consequences

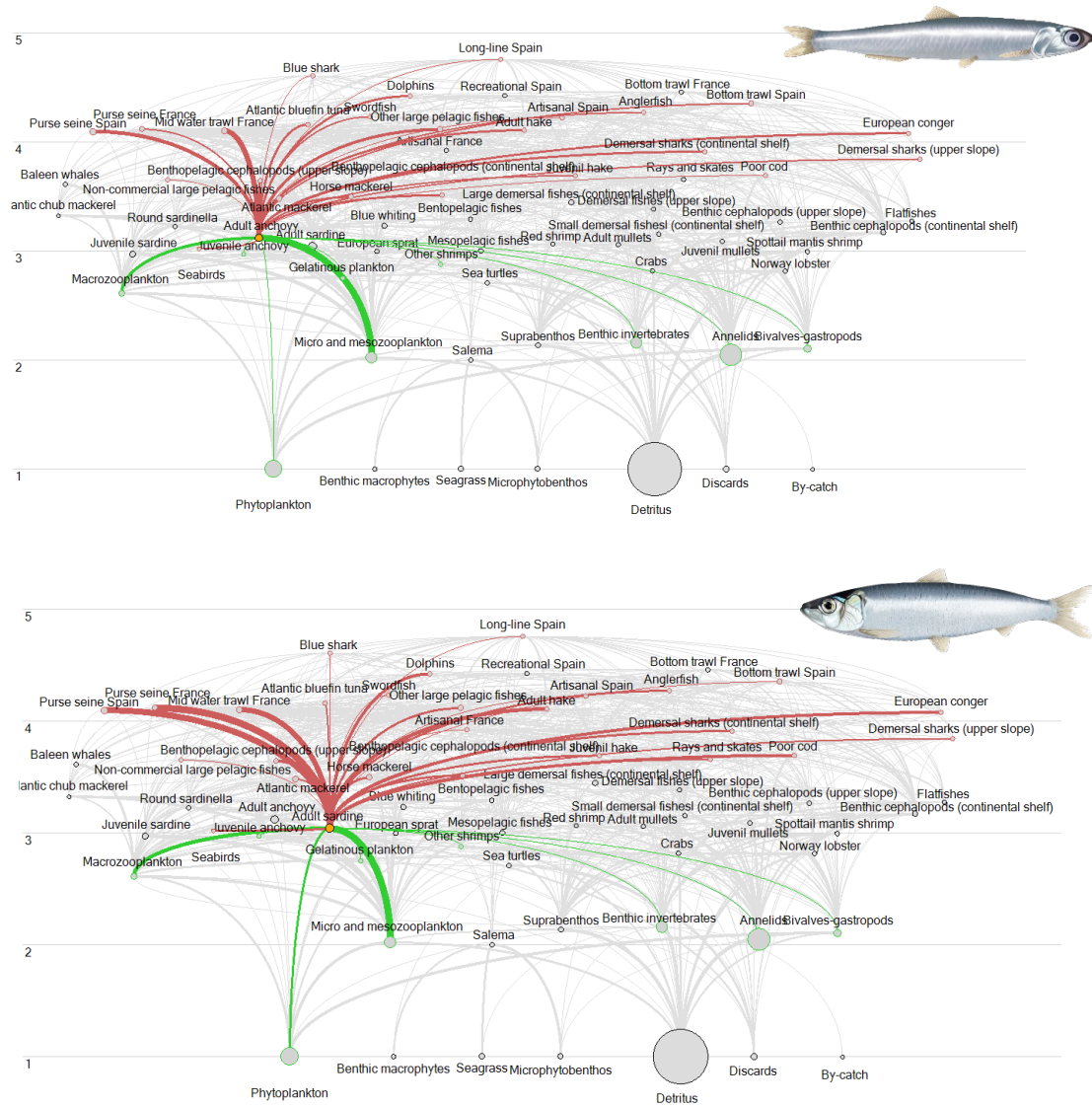
Changes in ecosystem components (target species, predators) & fisheries
 Projections (fisheries and CC) and management options



* Modified from Corrales et al. 2015. JMS; Biogeochemical GETM-MedERGOM model (JRC, D. Macias)

Species changes and their consequences

Changes in ecosystem components

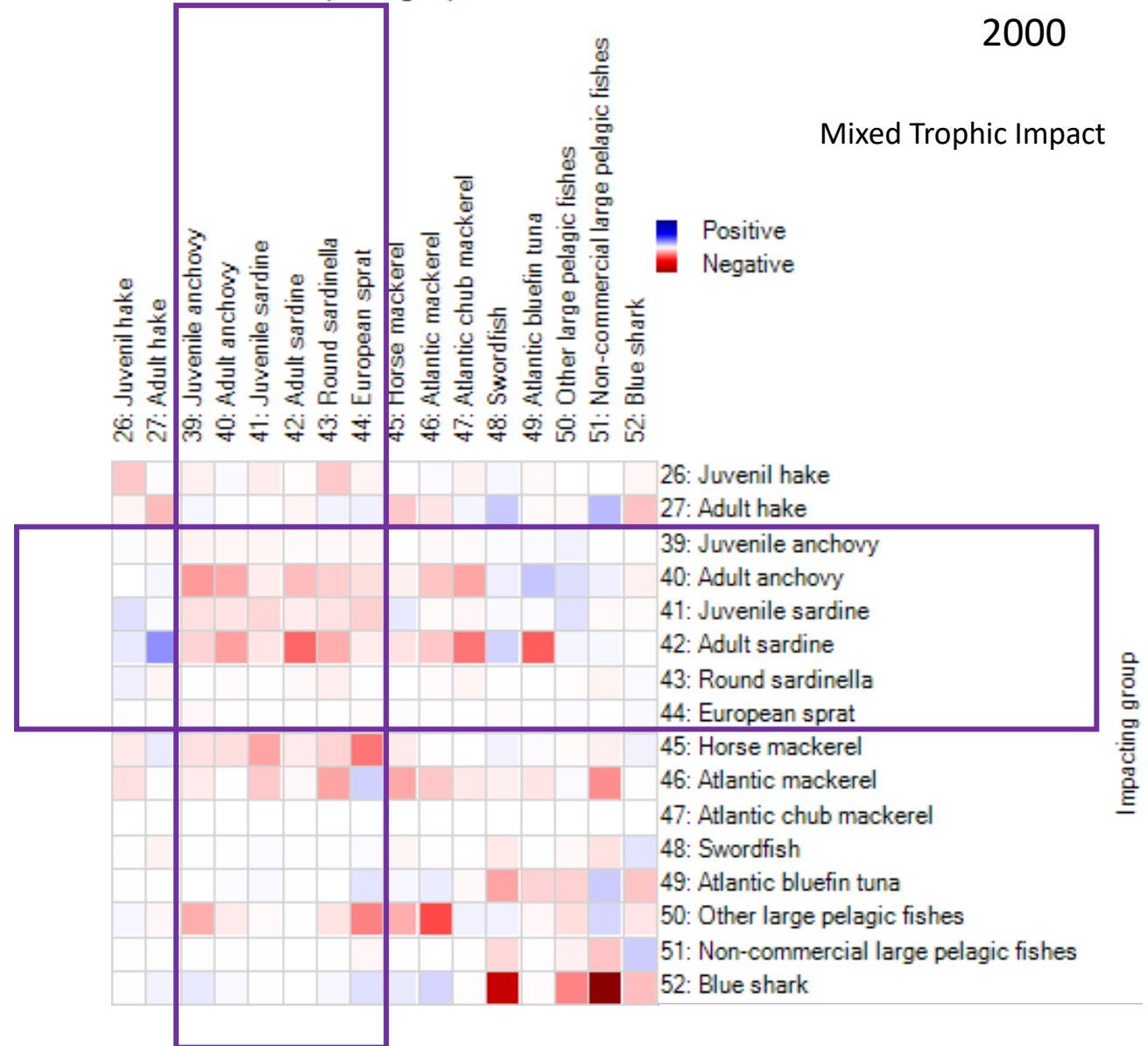


Impacted group

2000

Mixed Trophic Impact

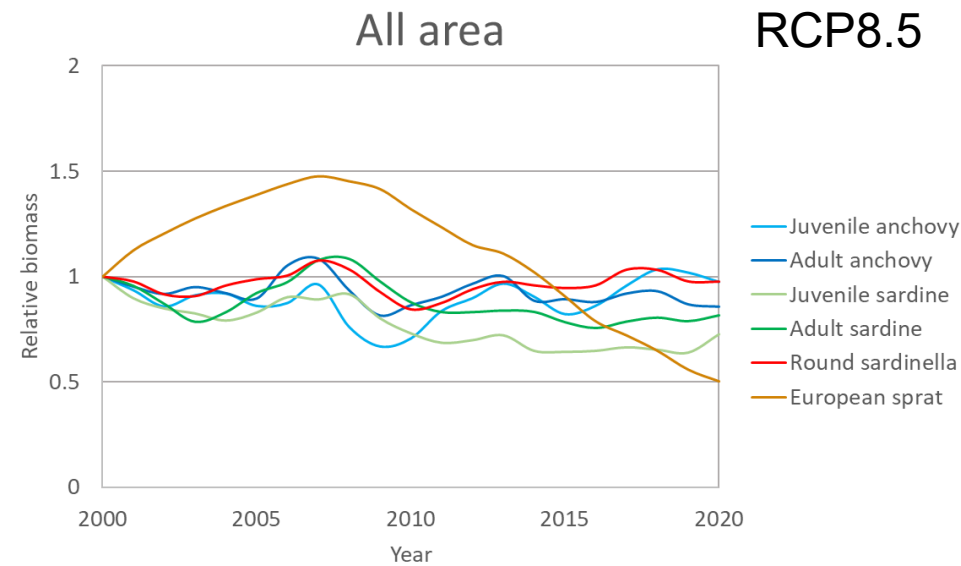
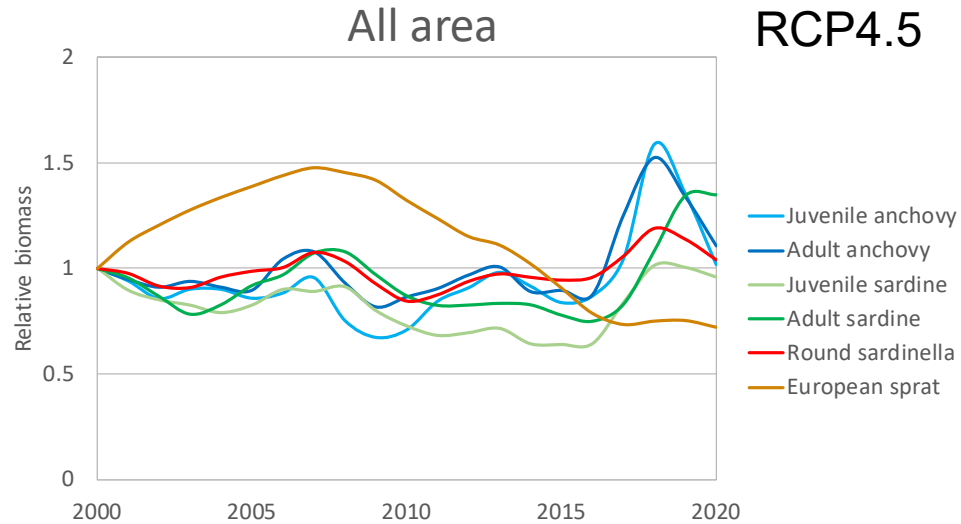
Positive
Negative



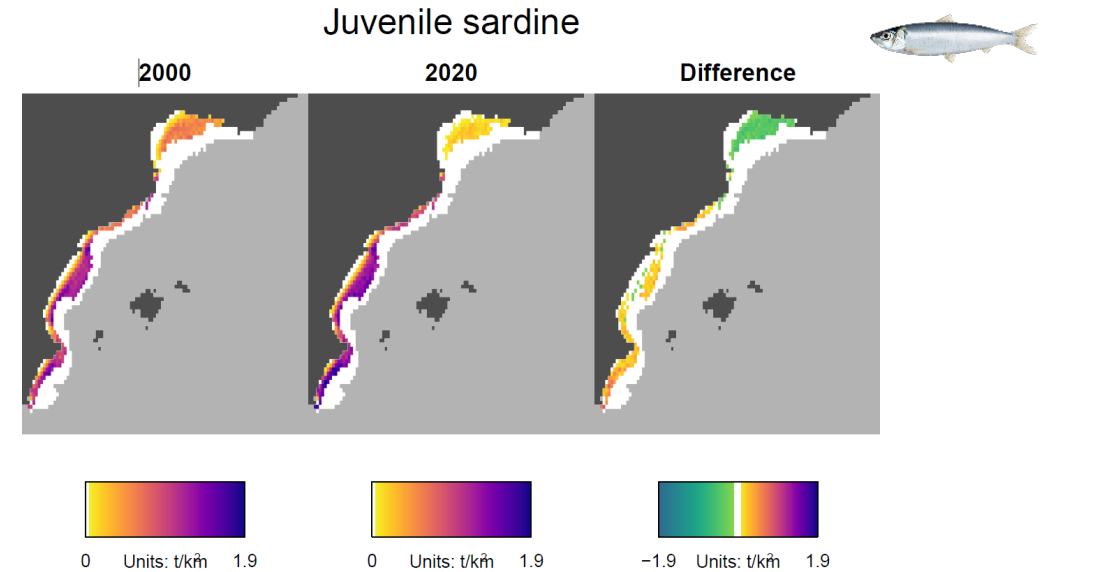
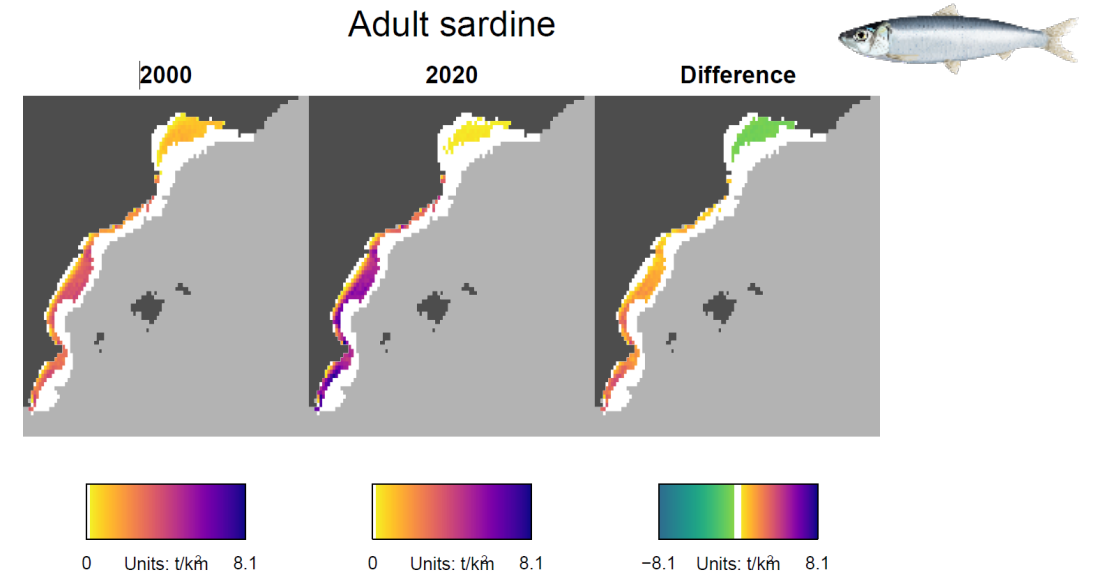
Impacting group

Species changes and their consequences

Changes in ecosystem components

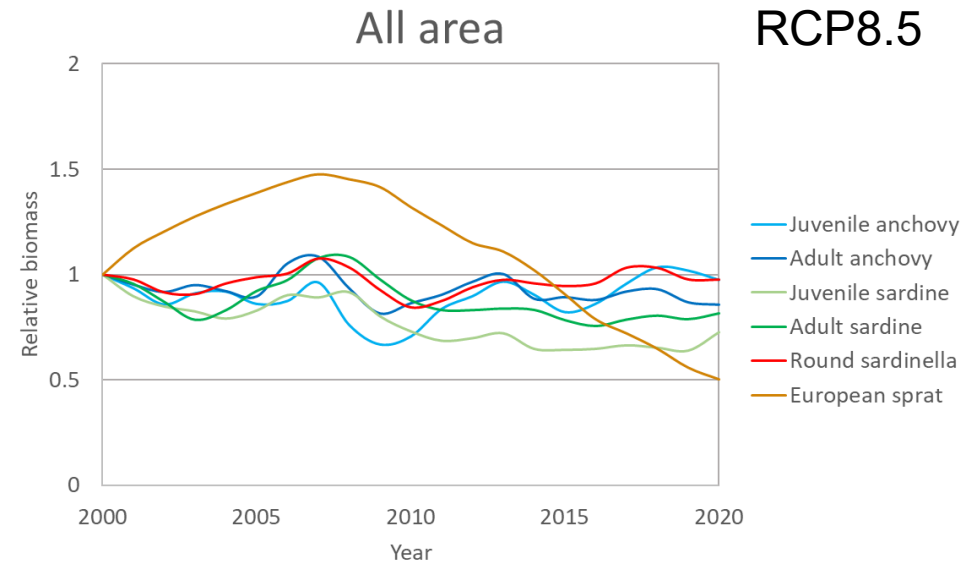
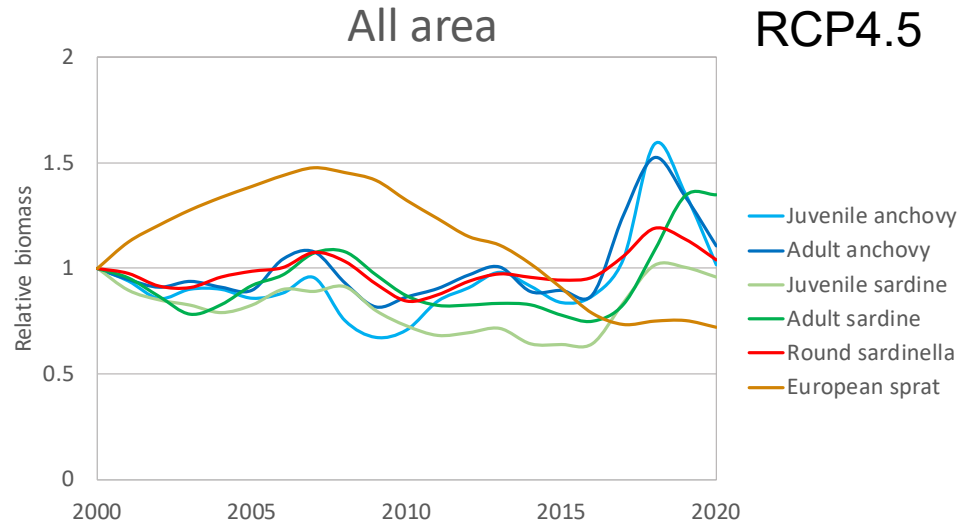


Relative biomass (2020/2000) under RCP4.5

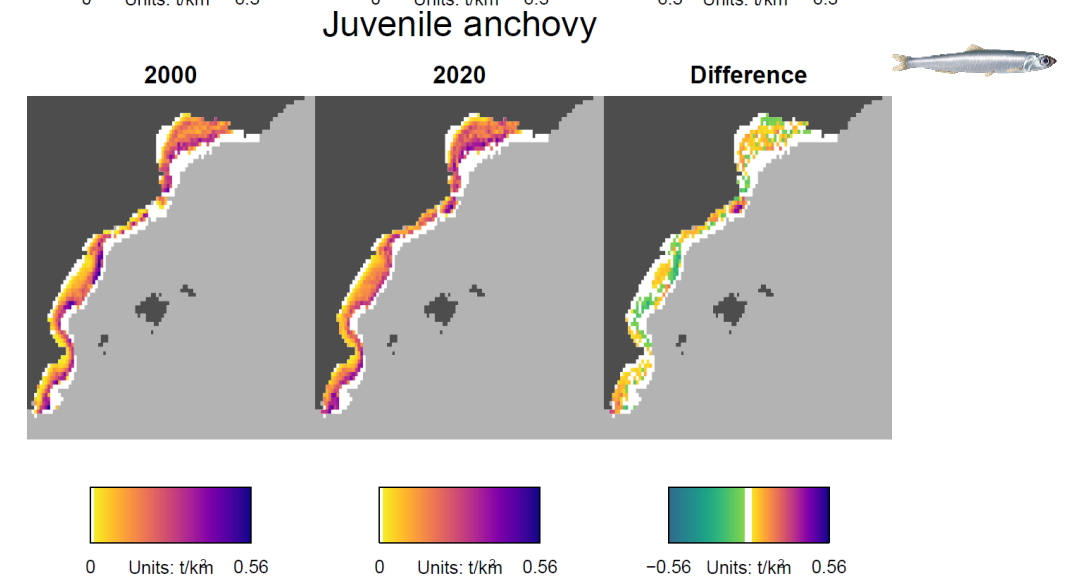
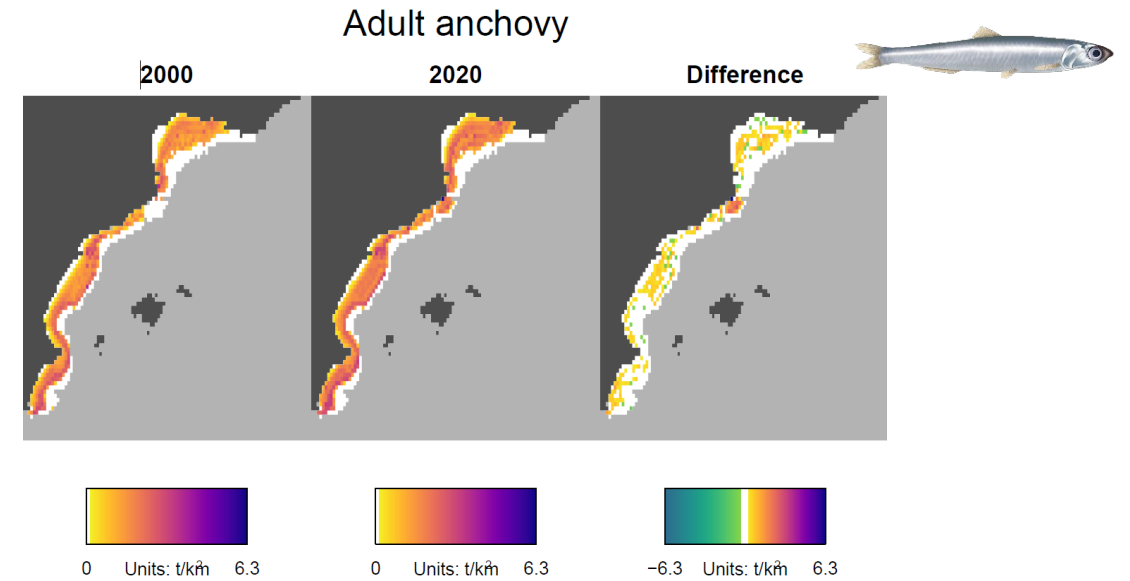


Species changes and their consequences

Changes in ecosystem components

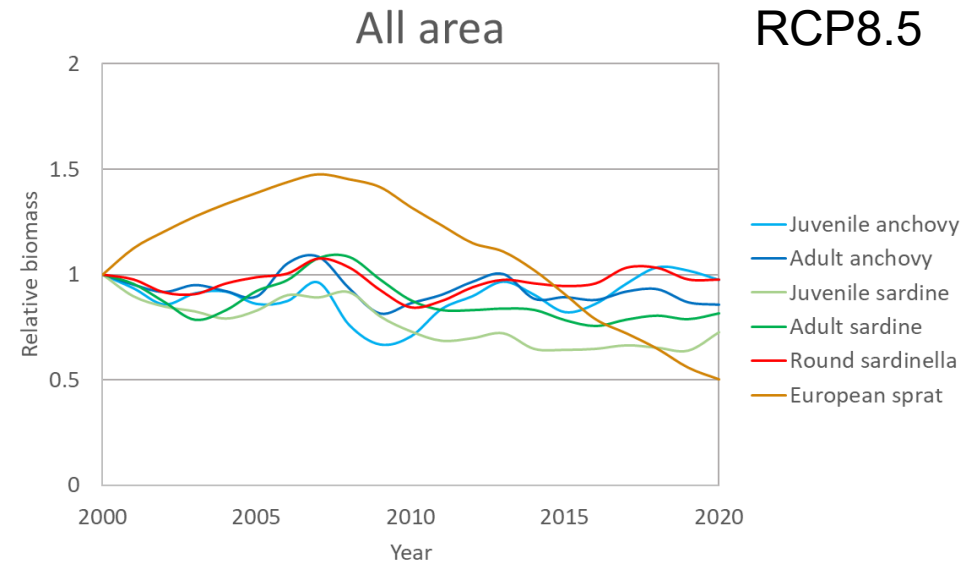
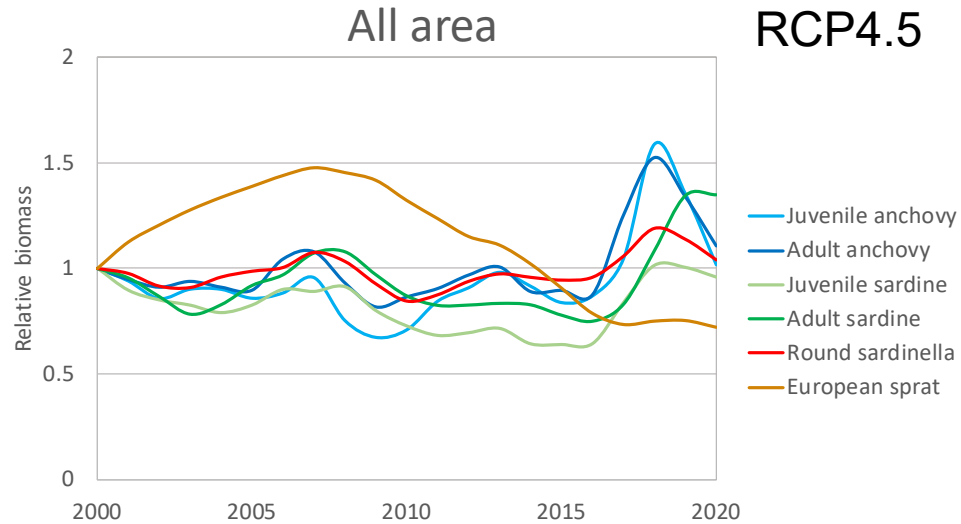


Relative biomass (2020/2000) under RCP4.5

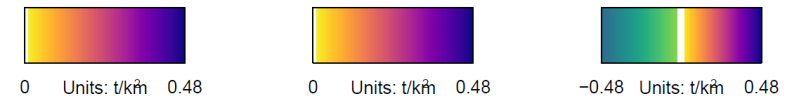
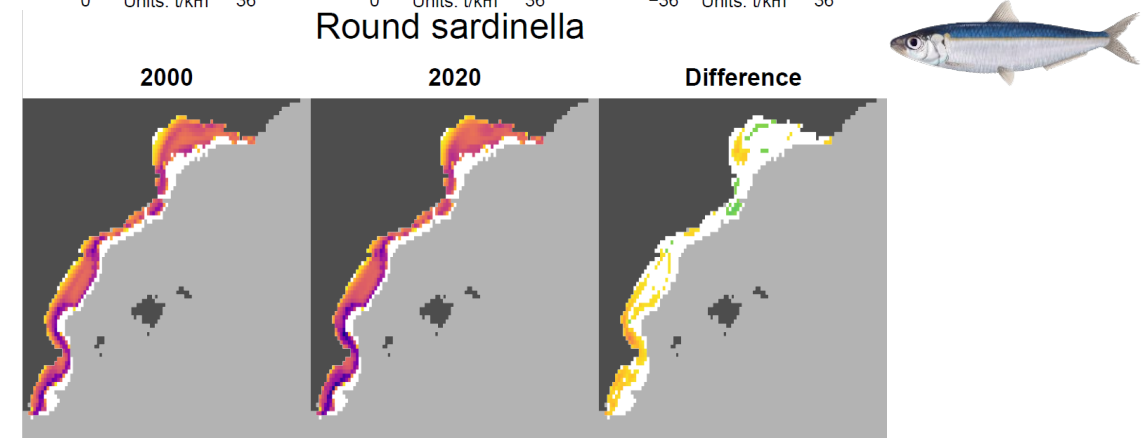
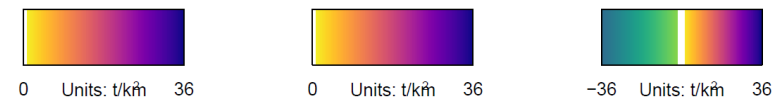
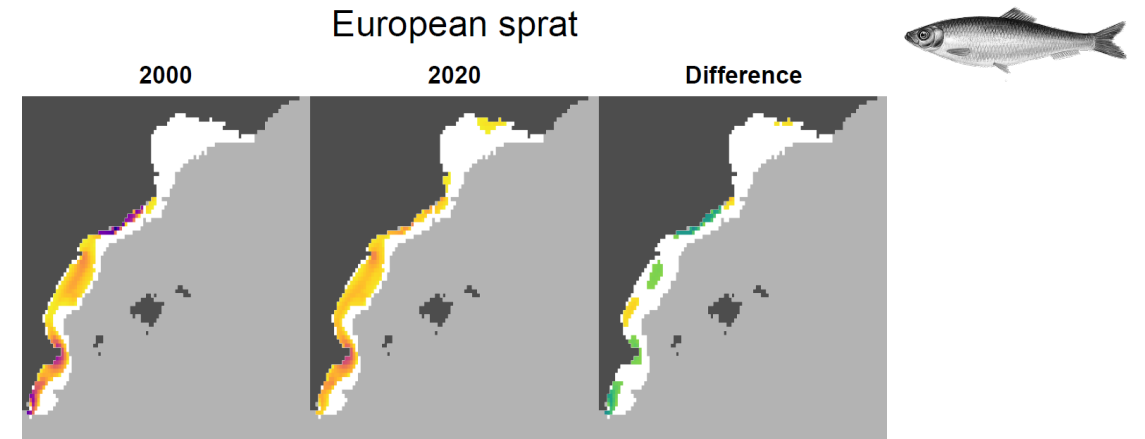


Species changes and their consequences

Changes in ecosystem components

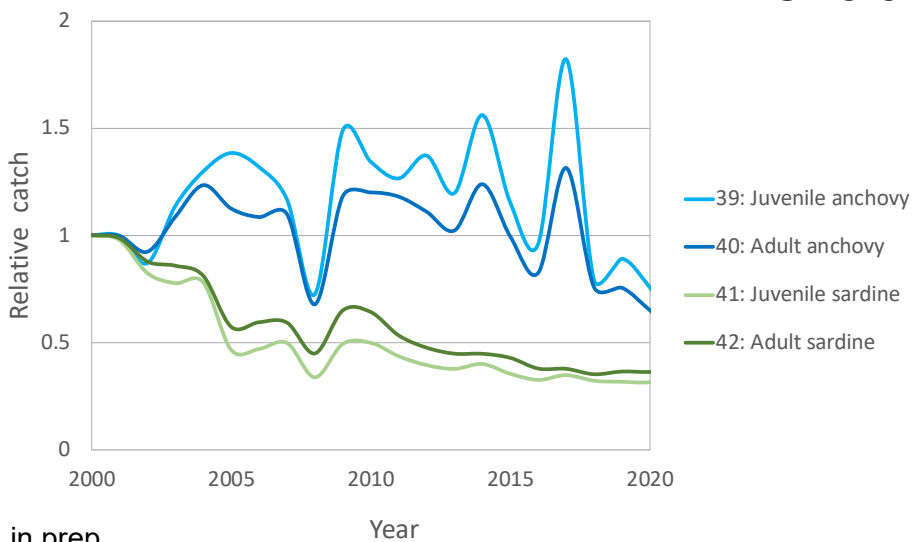
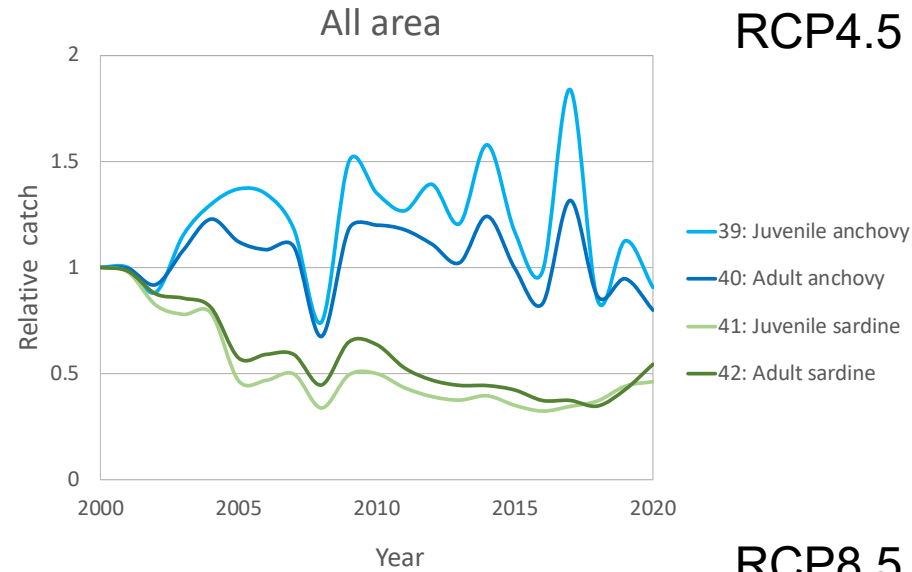


Relative biomass (2020/2000) under RCP4.5

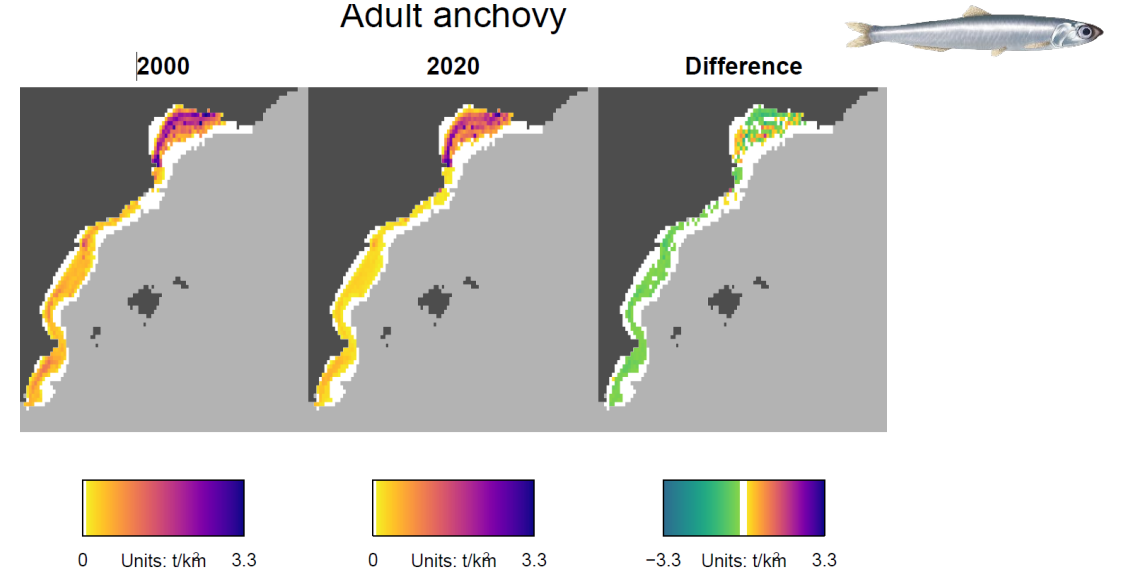
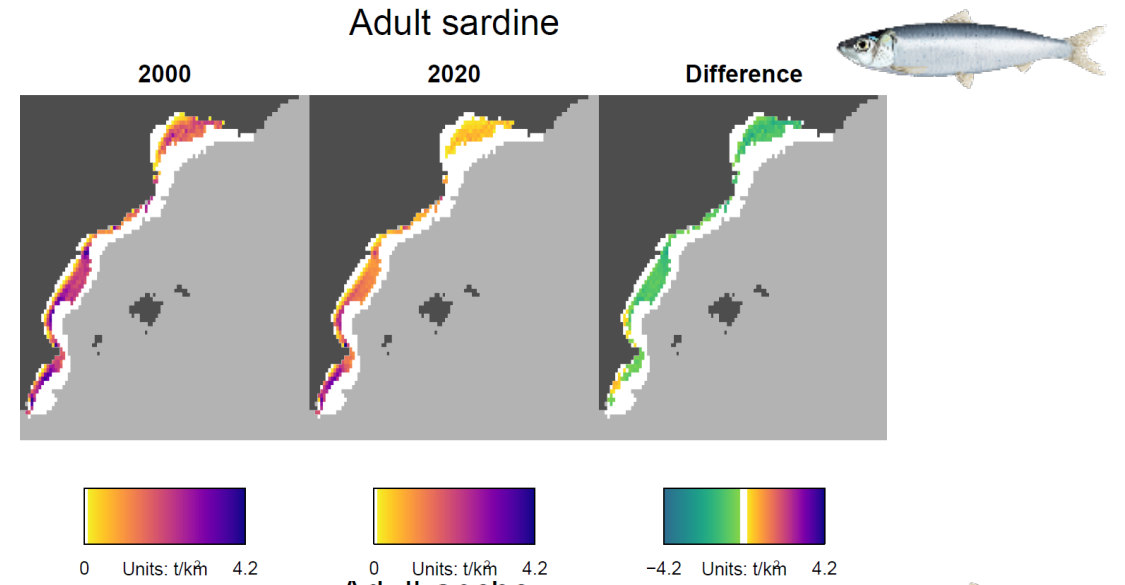


Species changes and their consequences

Changes in fisheries

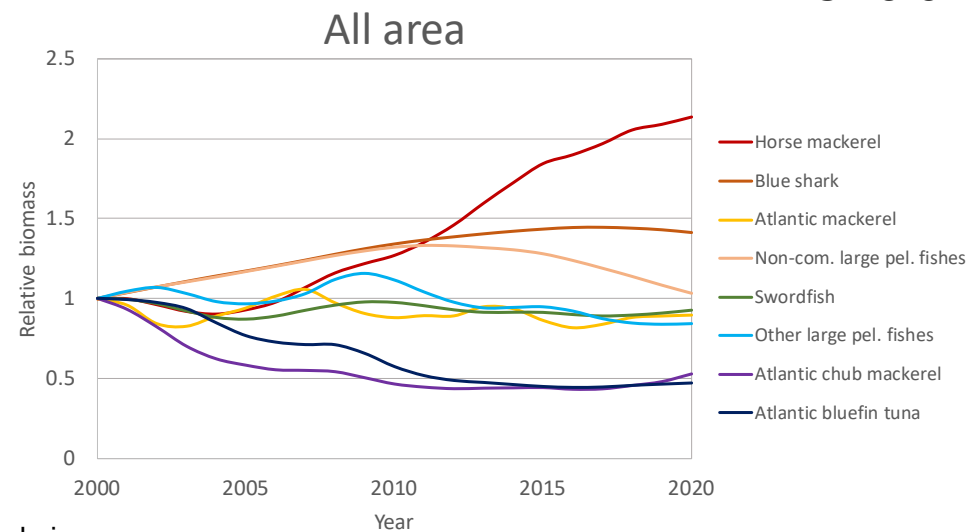
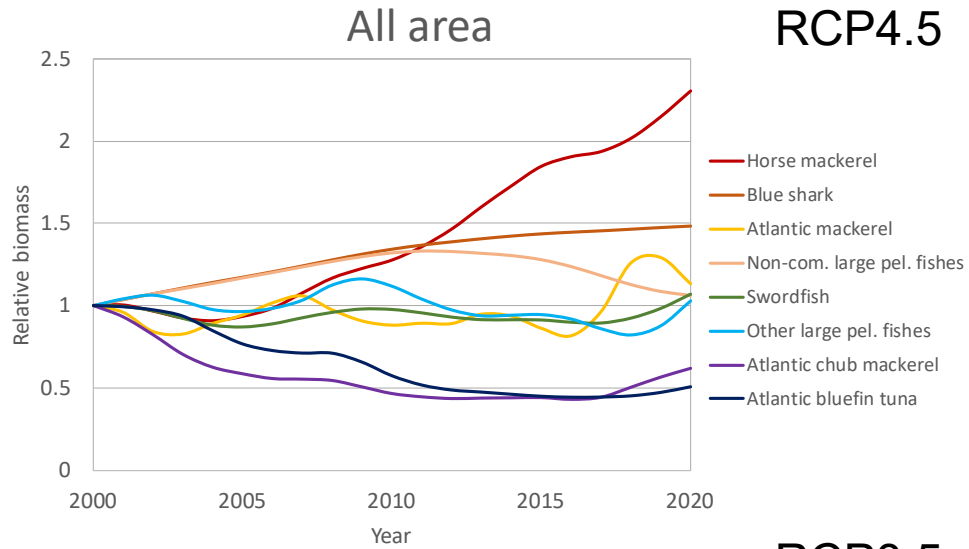


Relative catch (2020/2000) under RCP4.5

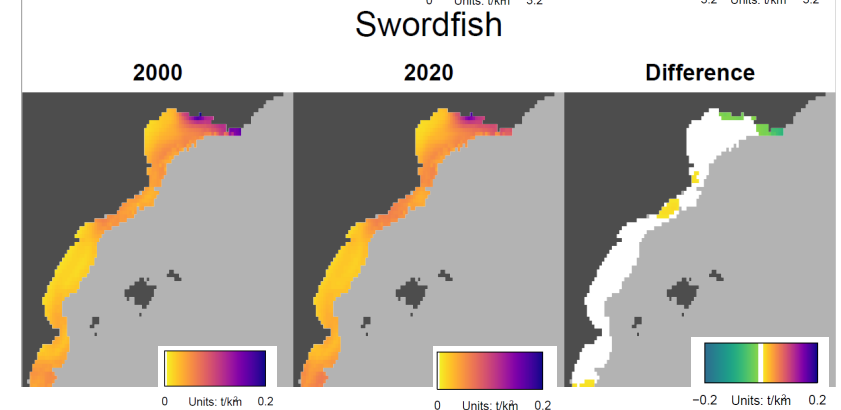
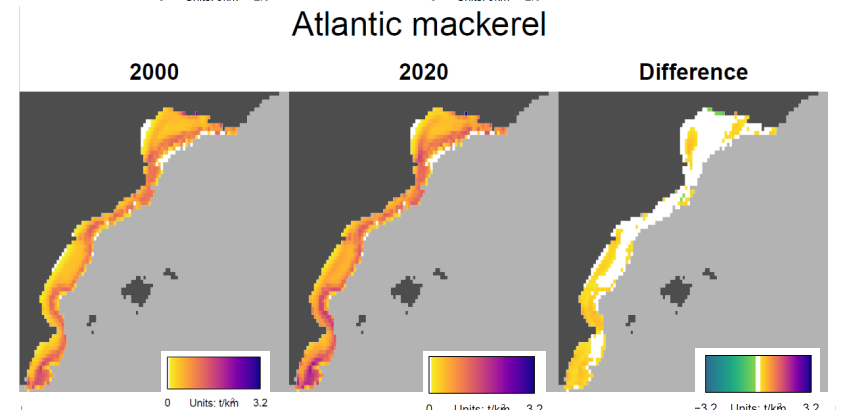
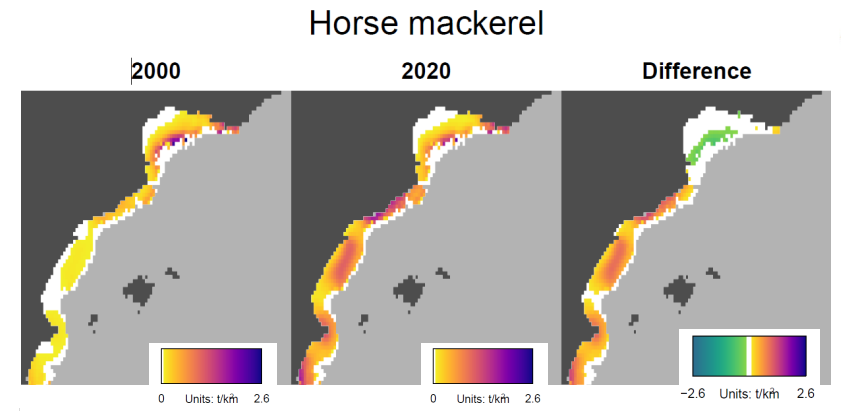


Species changes and their consequences

Changes in ecosystem components

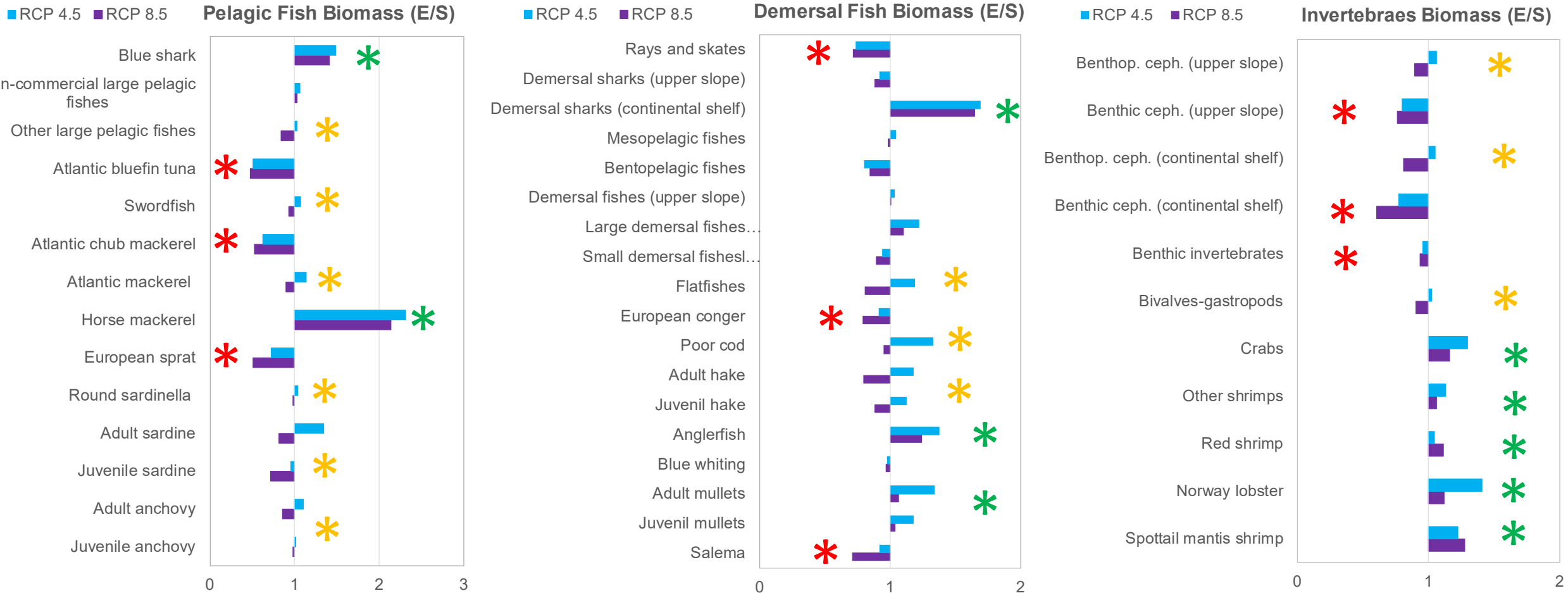


Relative biomass (2020/2000) under RCP4.5



Species changes and their consequences

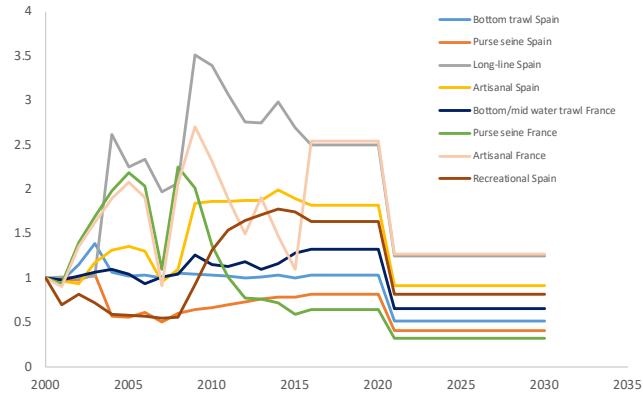
Identify winners and losers under fishing and different climate conditions (2020/2000)



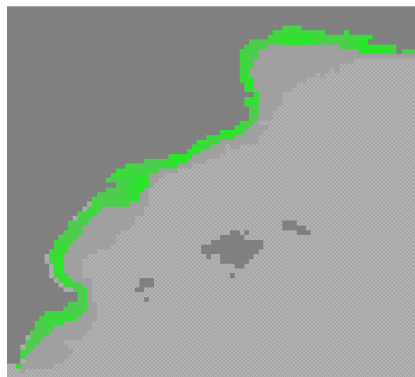
Species changes and their consequences

Alternative management options

Fishing effort change

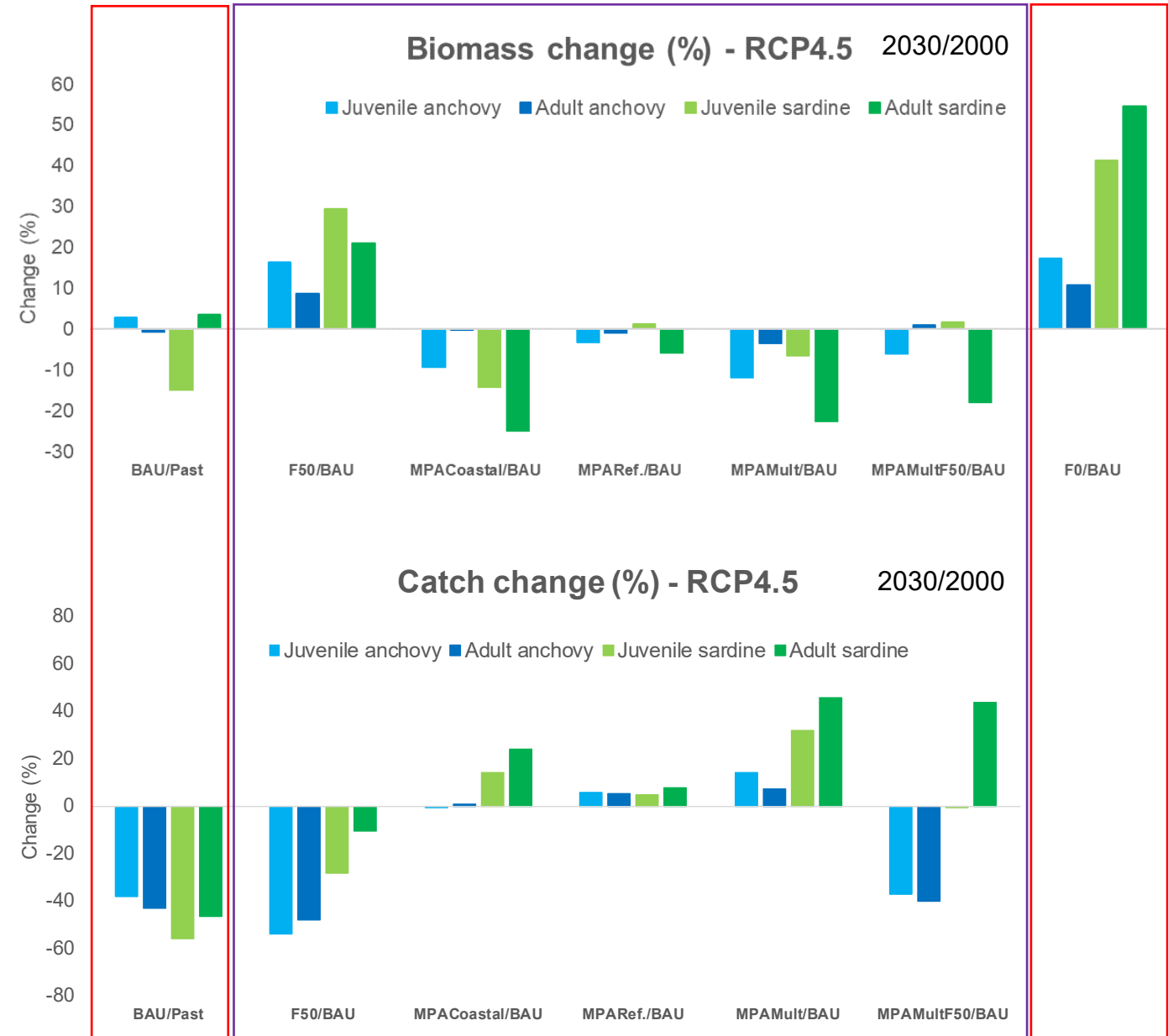
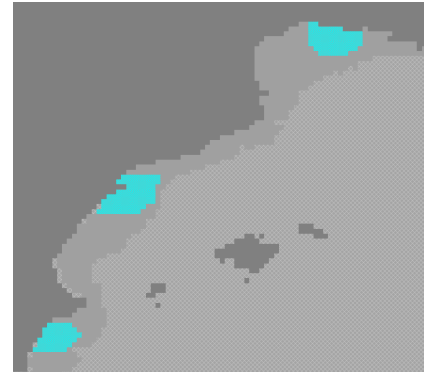


Spatial management options



MPAs in coastal areas

MPAs in "Climate Refuge"



What have we learned?

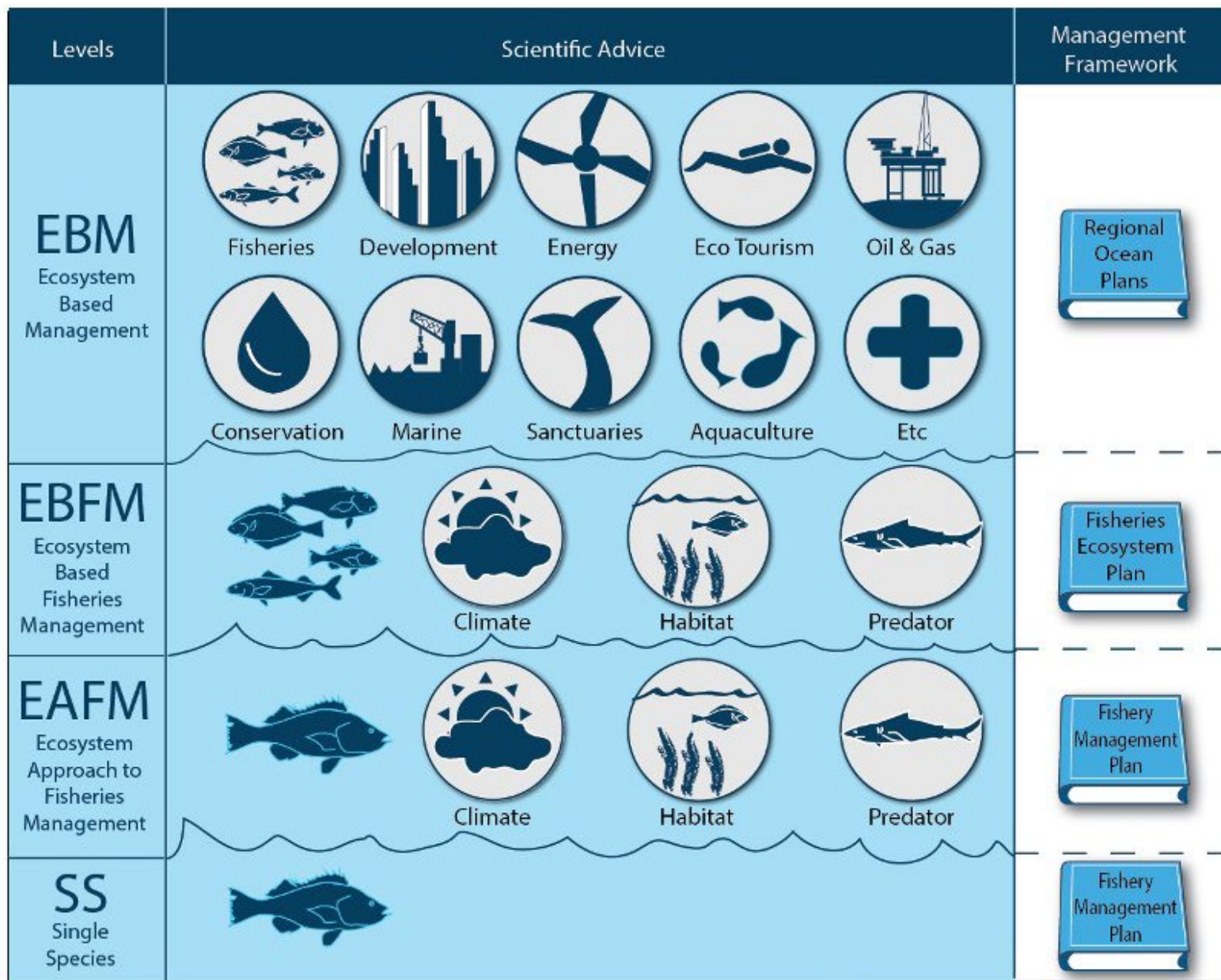
- Key biological and ecological new data
 - Low population dissimilarity, high trophic plasticity, high importance for predators

What have we learned?

- Key biological and ecological new data
 - Low population dissimilarity, high trophic plasticity, high importance for predators
- Status of sardine and anchovy further characterised
 - Biomass and catch are low (sardine), less so for anchovy
 - Body conditions declined for both species
 - Large sizes not found in population and landings
 - Fishing mortality is high
 - Environmental factors are mostly constraining sardine
 - We observe a latitudinal gradient in key traits with worse status in the north linked to cumulative impacts of environment and fishing

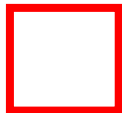
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 - Environmental factors are mostly constraining sardine
 - We observe a latitudinal gradient in key traits with worse status in the north linked to cumulative impacts of environment and fishing
- Winners and losers of observed changes
- Management alternatives need to be strong to curve the trends around (MEM prototype to use)
- New questions emerged (role of pollution, adaptation, induced evolution)





Obrigada!



Presenting at the conference

**Small Pelagic Fish:
New Frontiers in Science
and Sustainable
Management**
November 7 - 11, 2022
Lisbon, Portugal

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Sardina

Sardina pilchardus

Es pesca pelàgica pelada, com la sardina, necessitant un petit esforç per netejar les escames i després de fregar amb sal. És un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Introducció, la seva importància

La sardina és un dels peixos més importants del món, amb una producció anual de més de 10 milions de tones. És un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Principals trets biològics i ecològics

La sardina és un peix pelàgic, amb una vida mitjana de 3-4 anys. És un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Què es pot observar?

La sardina és un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Què podria explicar aquests canvis?

La sardina és un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Seiò

Engraulis encrasicolus

Una espècie molt important en l'ecosistema. És un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Principals trets biològics i ecològics

La seiò és un peix pelàgic, amb una vida mitjana de 3-4 anys. És un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Què s'observa?

La seiò és un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Què podria explicar aquests canvis?

La seiò és un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Alatxa

Sardinella aurita

Una espècie que creix en importància. És un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

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La alatxa és un peix pelàgic, amb una vida mitjana de 3-4 anys. És un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

Què es pot fer?

La alatxa és un peix molt important a tot el món, especialment al sud de l'Atlàntic i el Mediterrani. En els últims anys ha hagut grans canvis poblacionals per la pesca i els canvis climàtics, amb efectes socioeconòmics i ecològics. Ara hi ha preocupació per una disminució de la biomassa i la disminució de la mida dels individus, així com per la disminució de la producció de ous i larves.

<http://martacollmarine.science/spf-contributions/>
<https://martacollmarine.science/pelweb-infographics/>

Infografia realitzada per:
 Amparo Hidalgo Galiana (@ahg_ilustracion)

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Small Pelagic Fish: New Frontiers in Science and Sustainable Management
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Species roles and drivers

Trophic ecology of predators

1422



ARTICLE

Predator-prey interactions in the face of management regulations: changes in Mediterranean small pelagic species are not due to increased tuna predation

Elisabeth Van Beveren, Jean-Marc Fromentin, Sylvain Bonhommeau, Anne-Elise Nieblas, Luisa Metral, Blandine Brisset, Marko Jusup, Robert Klaus Bauer, Pablo Brosset, and Claire Saraux

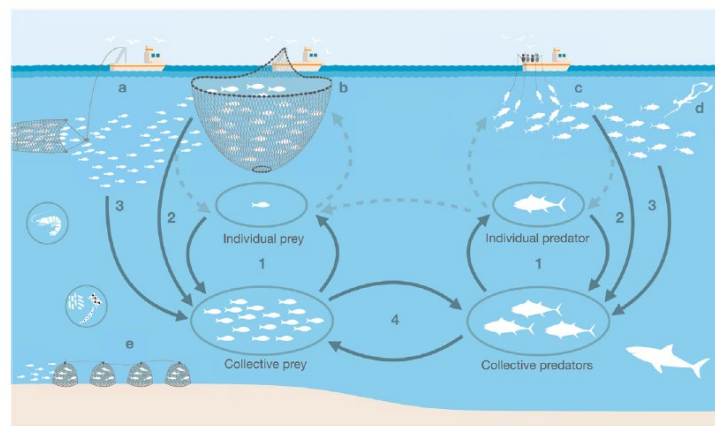
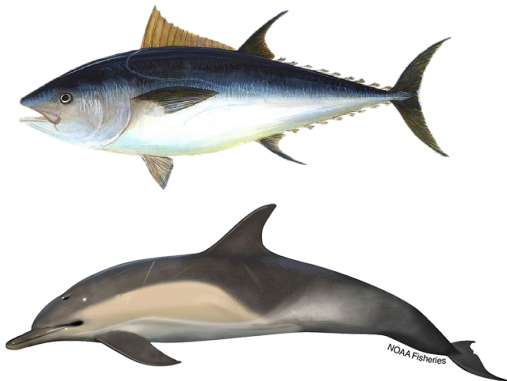
Vol. 603: 13–27, 2018
<https://doi.org/10.3354/meps12672>

MARINE ECOLOGY PROGRESS SERIES
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Published September 17

Dolphin predation pressure on pelagic and demersal fish in the northwestern Mediterranean Sea

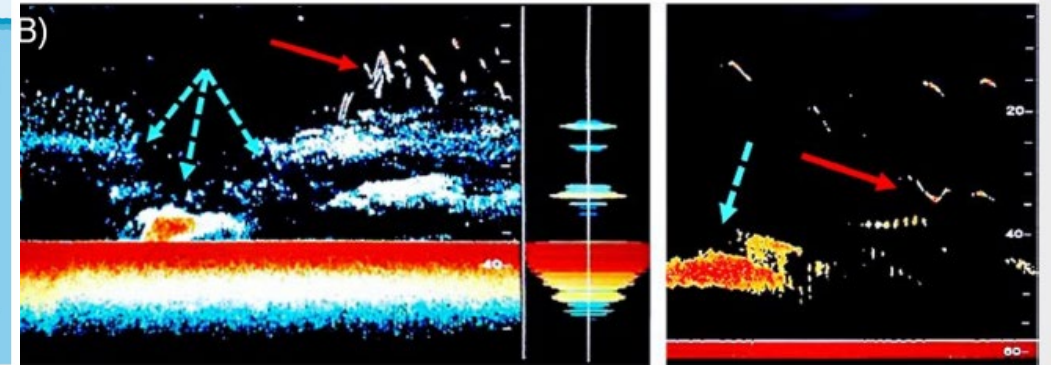
Quentin Queiros^{1,*}, Jean-Marc Fromentin¹, Guillemme Astruc², Robert Klaus Bauer¹,
 Claire Saraux¹



Trends In Ecology & Evolution

Box 1. A case study of small pelagics fisheries

In the North-western Mediterranean, small pelagics such as sardines (*Sardina pilchardus*) and anchovies (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) support purse seine fisheries (Figure 1). Over the past few decades, biomass and landings of small pelagics in the area have substantially dropped and catches have been increasingly of smaller-sized fish [12]. Anecdotal evidence by fishers suggests that the drop in captures of small pelagics may be related to changes in their behaviour. In particular, fishers are reporting that small pelagics do no longer form as large and cohesive groups as in the past, and are generally less accessible to fishing. Fishers associate these behaviours to the increasing presence of bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), whose abundance locally increased after the establishment of effective tuna management measures [12]. In general, risk of predation is expected to trigger increased cohesion rather than prey spitting in smaller and more dispersed shoals [5]. However, the various mechanisms we explain here could underlie the observed changes in shoaling behaviour, link to changes in the phenotypic composition of shoals caused by fisheries, and thereby explain why small pelagics no longer show the expected shoaling behaviour in the presence of tunas.



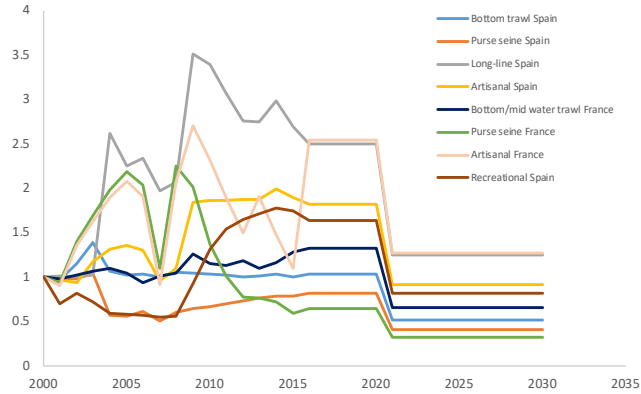
Trends in Ecology & Evolution

Species changes and their consequences

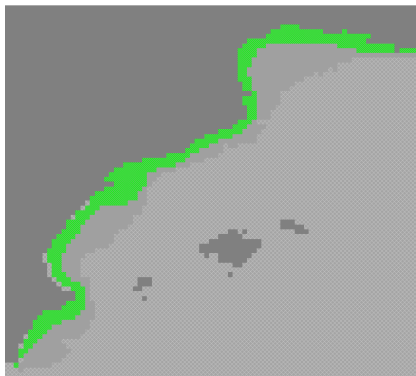
Alternative management options

2030/2000

Fishing effort change

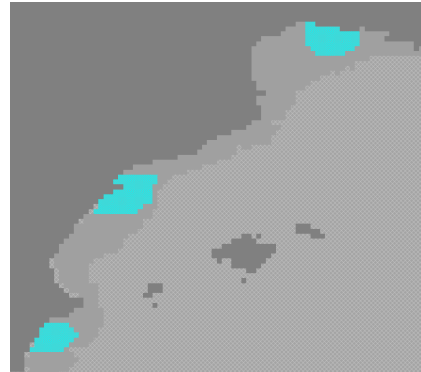


Spatial management options

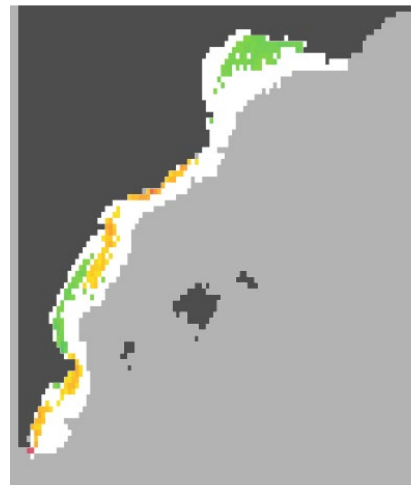


MPAs in coastal areas

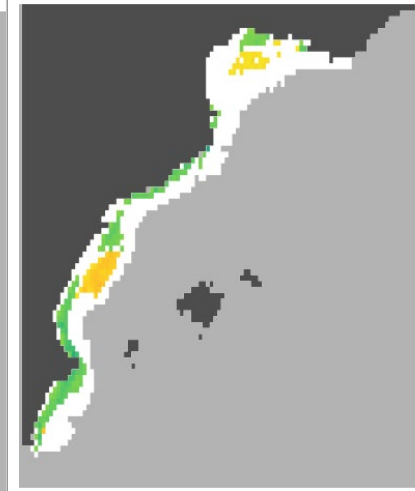
MPAs in "Climate Refuge"



Fishing



50%Red&MPAs



No fishing

