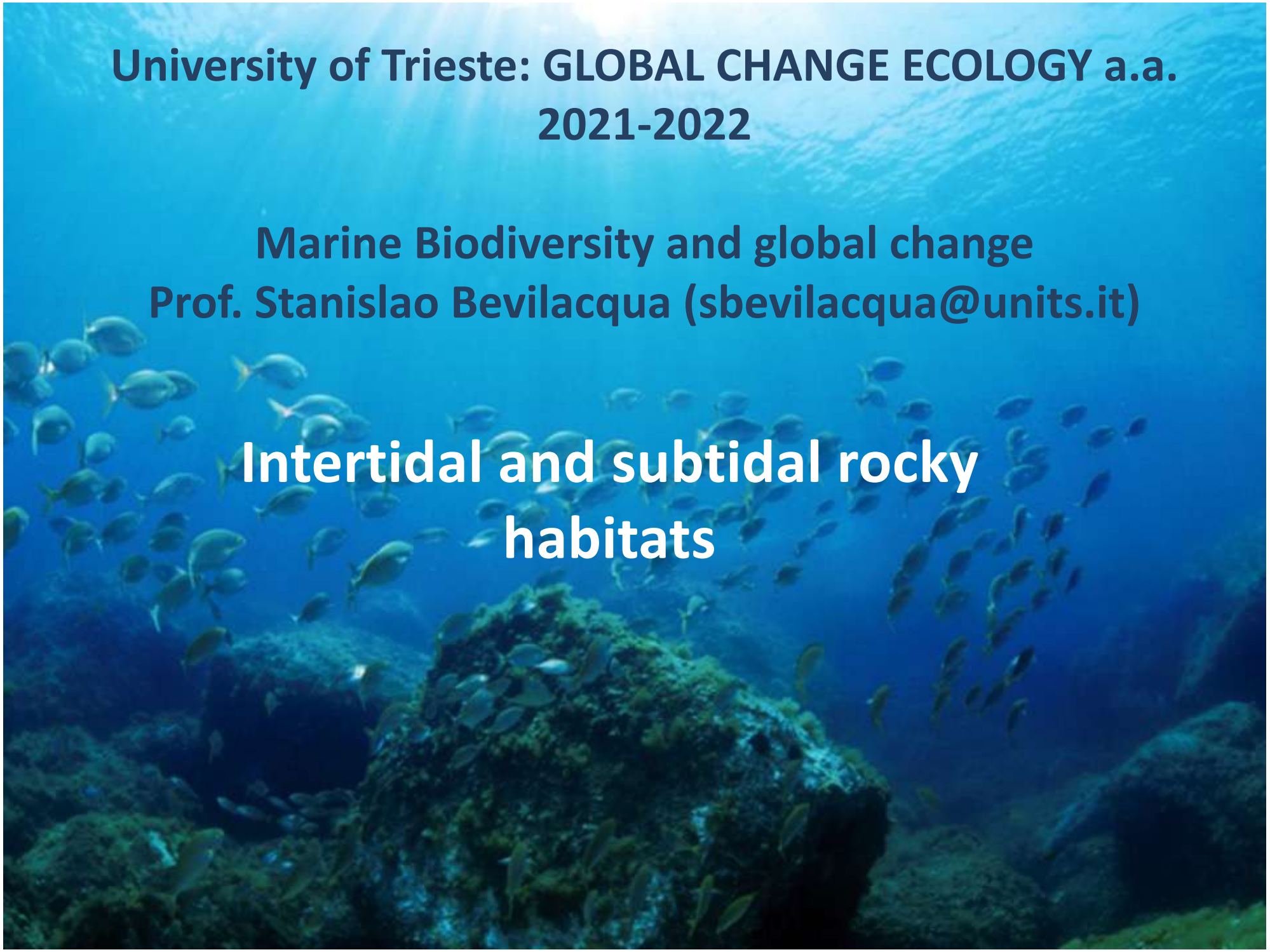


University of Trieste: GLOBAL CHANGE ECOLOGY a.a. 2021-2022

Marine Biodiversity and global change

Prof. Stanislao Bevilacqua (sbevilacqua@units.it)

Intertidal and subtidal rocky habitats

Intertidal rocky reefs

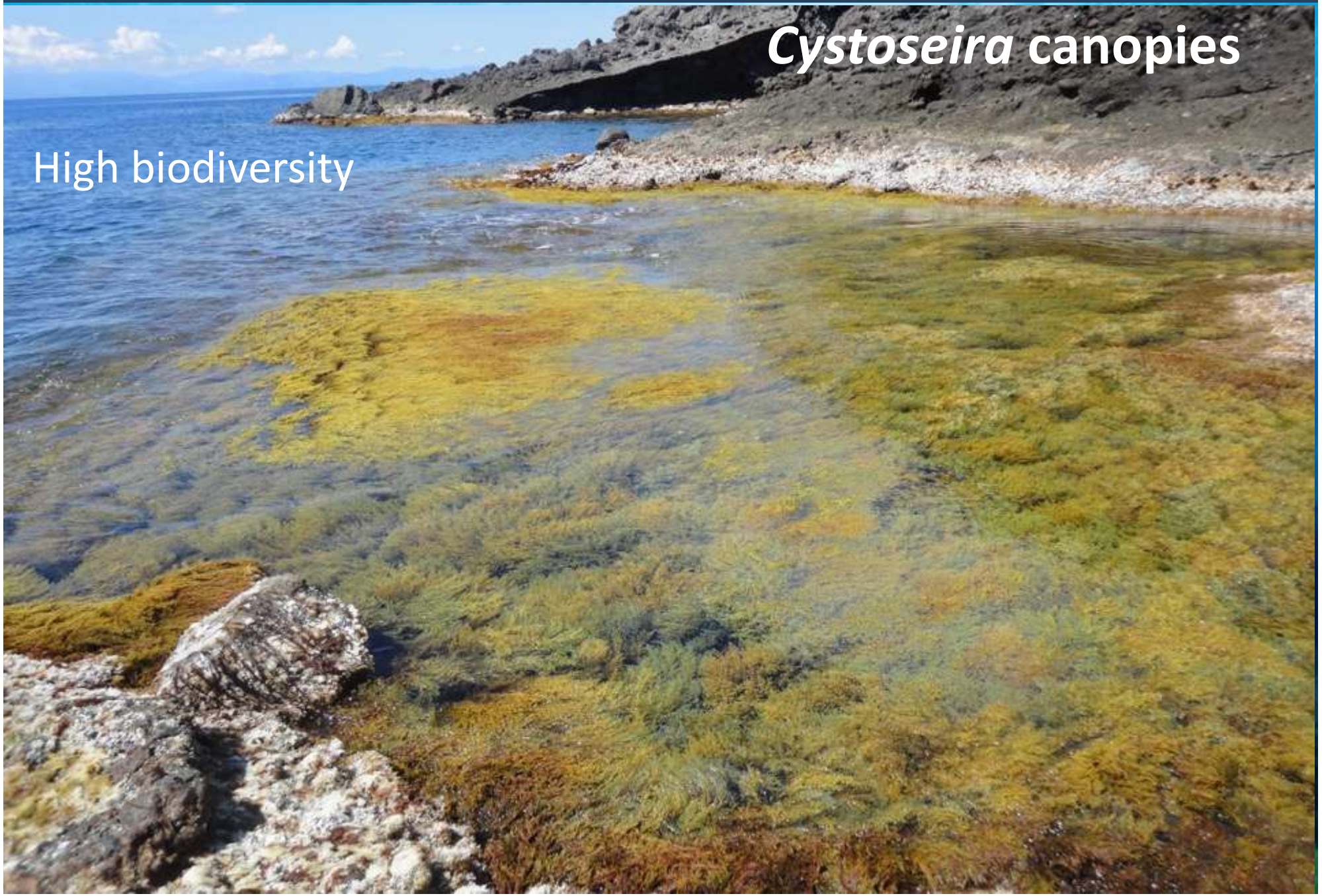
Reduced diversity

Barnacles, littorinids, limpets, cyanobacteria, anthozoans, algae (encrusting, turf). In enriched waters, mussels.

Harsh environmental conditions

due to air exposure, high temperature, hydrodinamism, so high physical disturbance

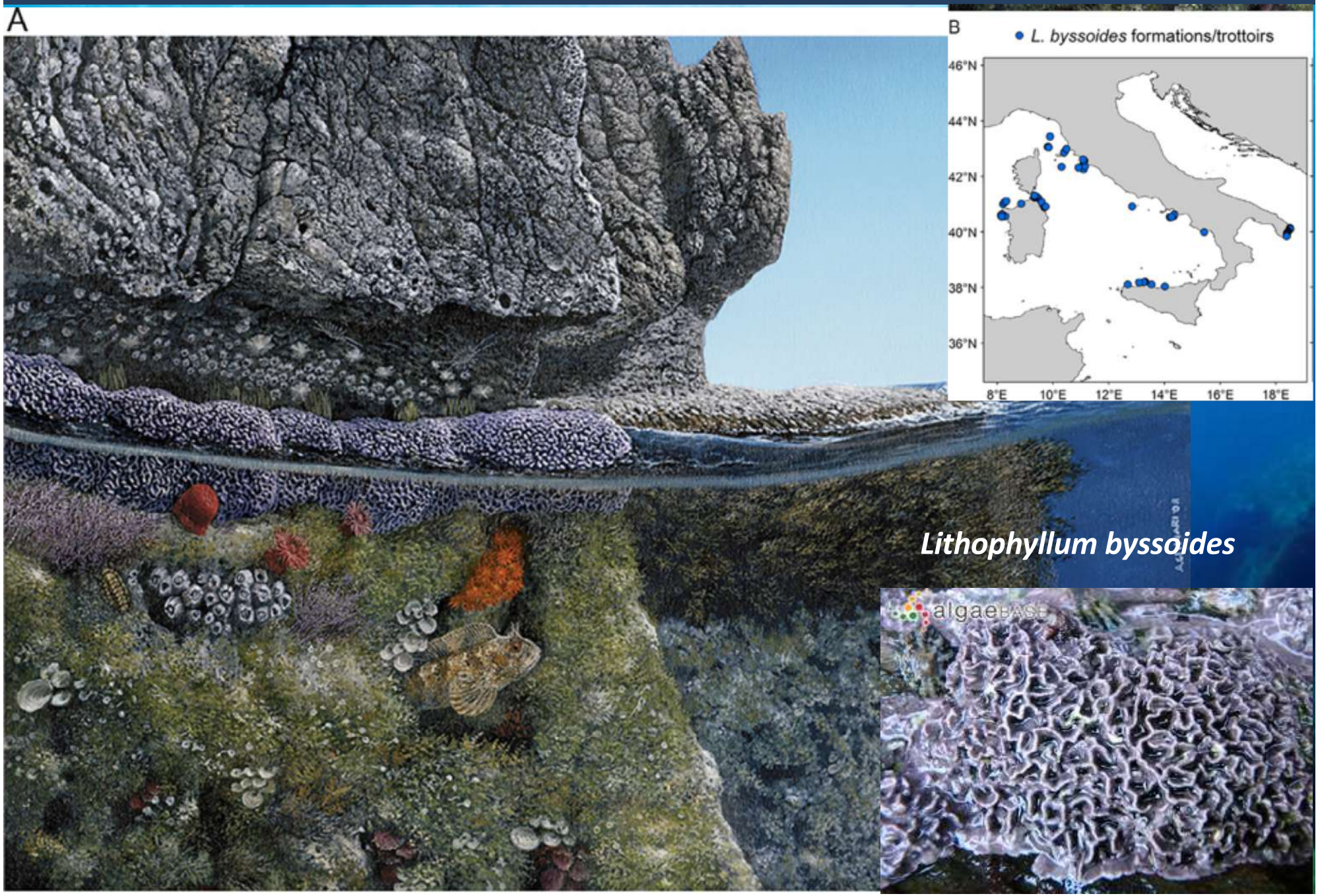
Intertidal rocky reefs



Lithophyllum rims

Bioconstructions

Lithophyllum rims



Vermetid reefs

Vermetid reefs

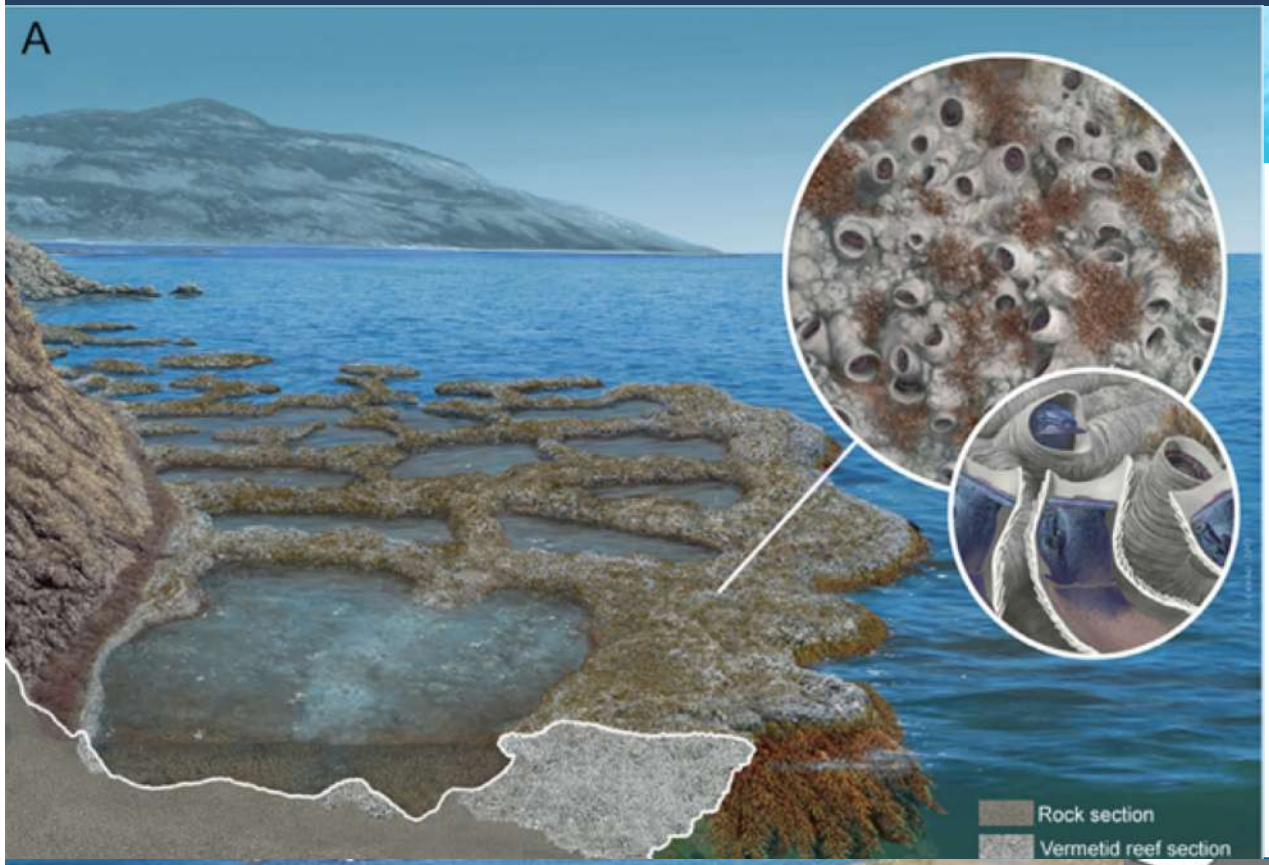
Lithophyllum incrustans

Lithophyllum byssoides

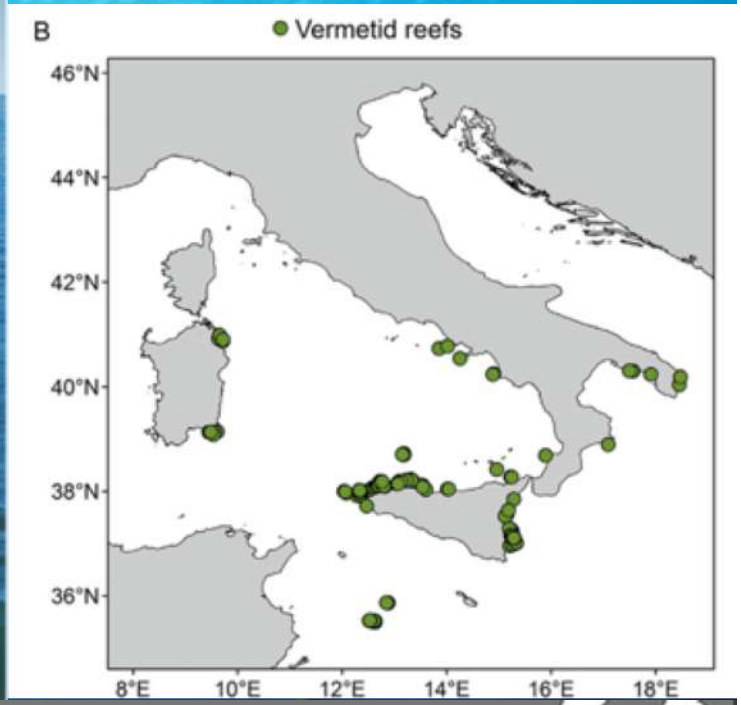
Dendropoma (Novastoa) petraeum

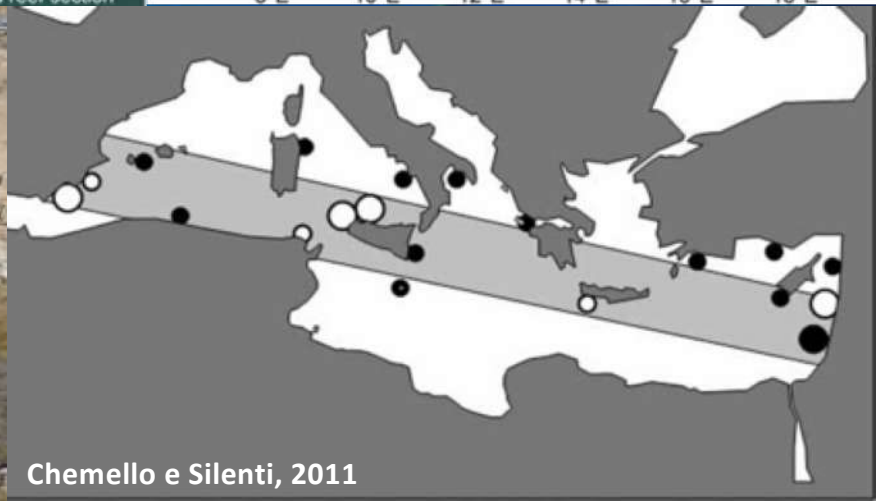
Neogoniolithon brassica-florida

Vermetid reefs



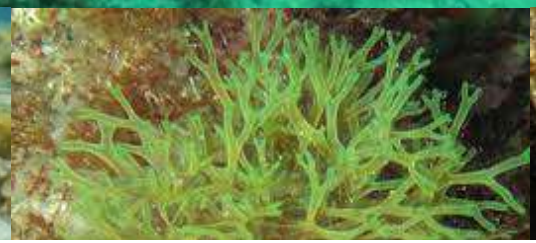
Distribution in Italy and the Mediterranean Sea





Chemello e Silenti, 2011

Subtidal macroalgal stands



Cystoseira s.l. forests

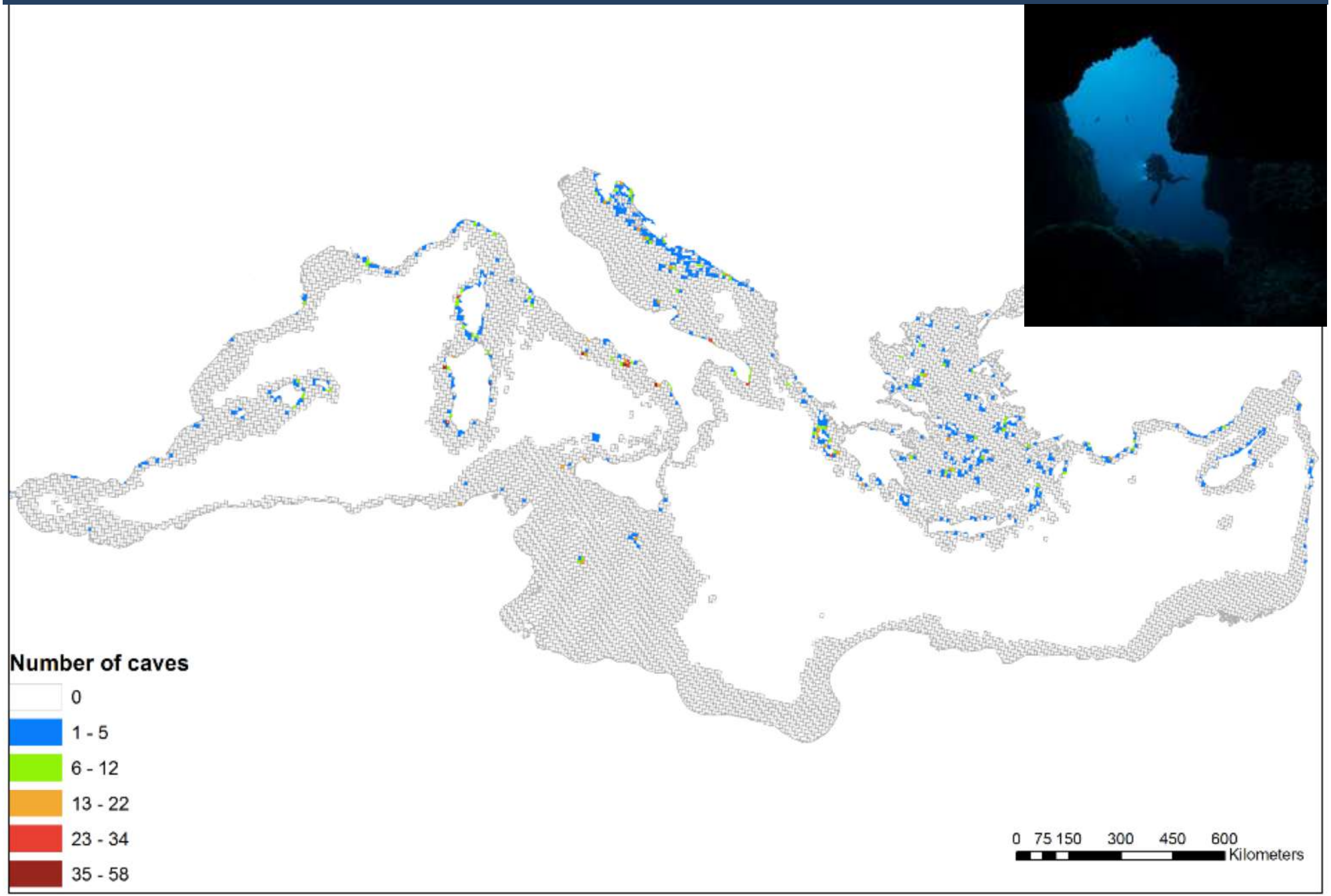
Fucales (*Ericaria*, *Gongolaria*, *Cystoseira*)

Subtidal macroalgal stands

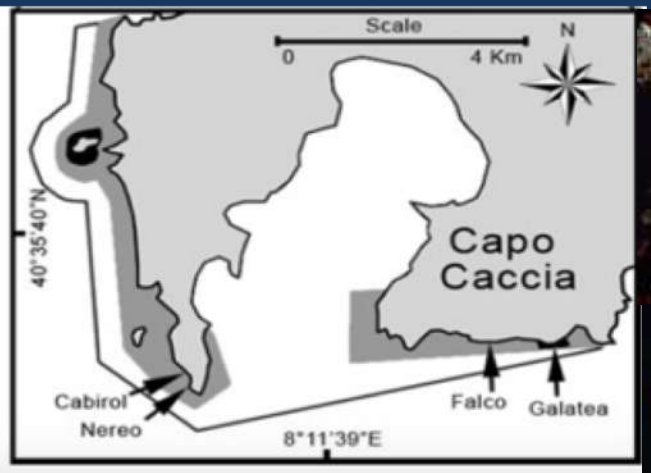
Subtidal rocky cliffs

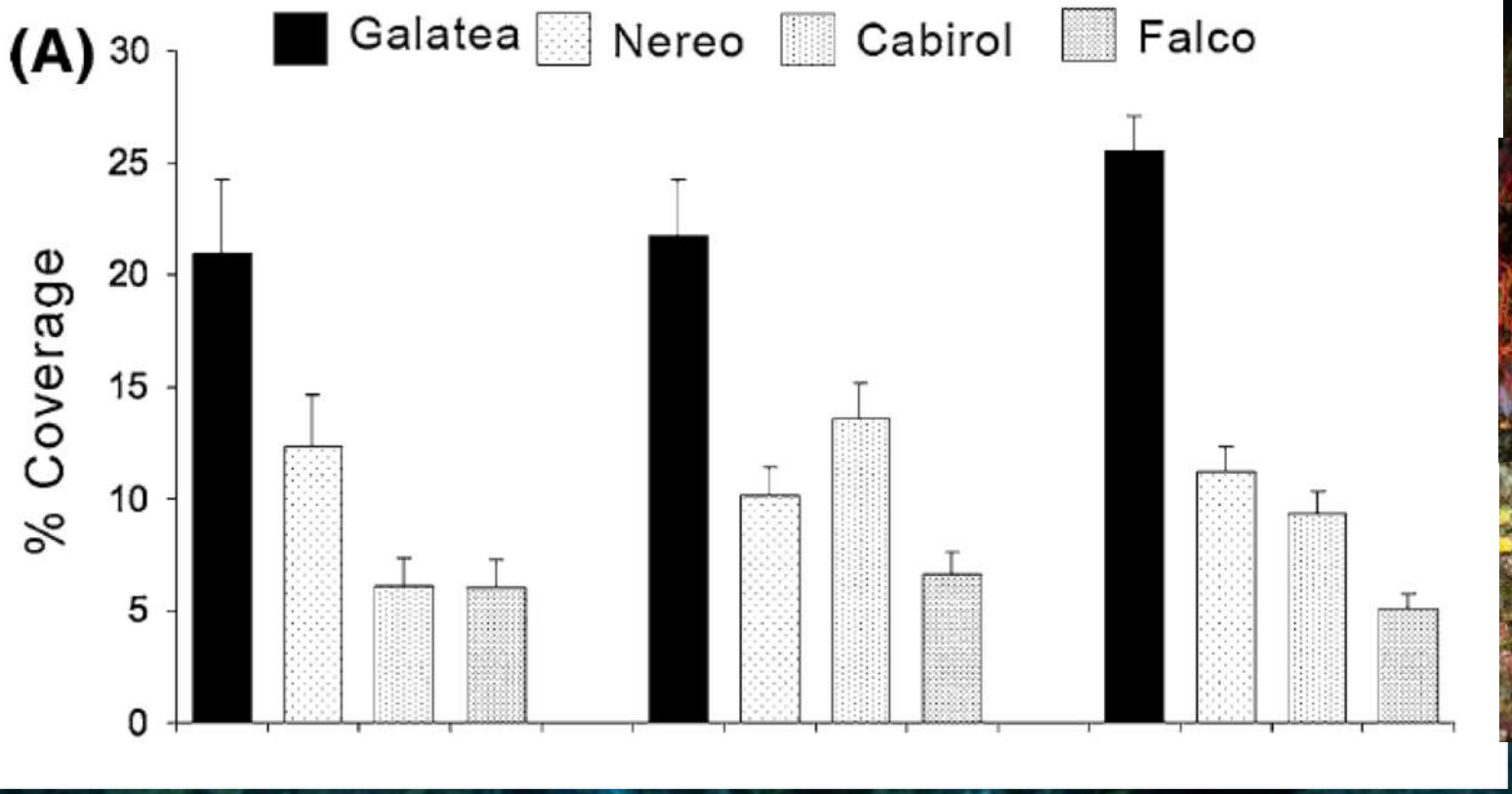
Subtidal rocky cliffs

Submarine caves



Effects on fragile organisms

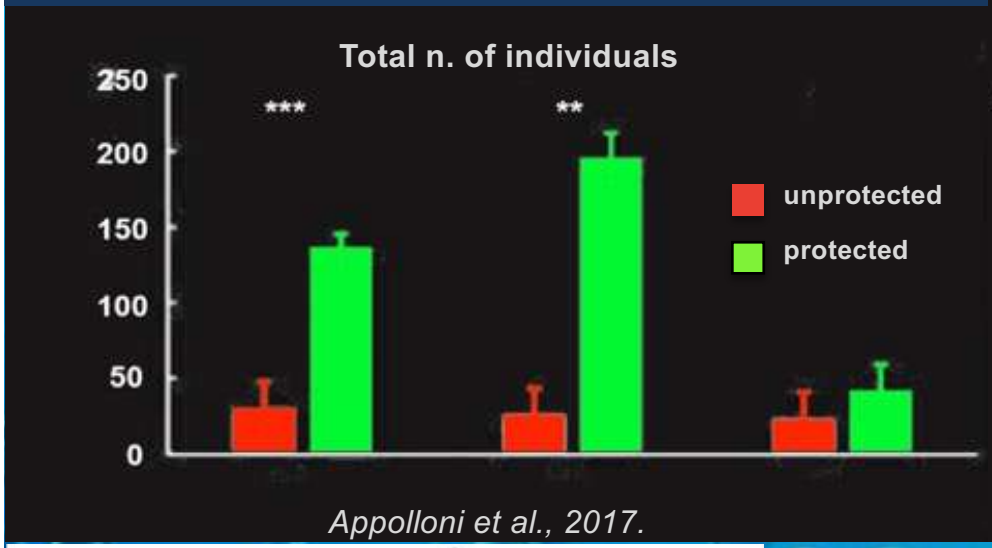


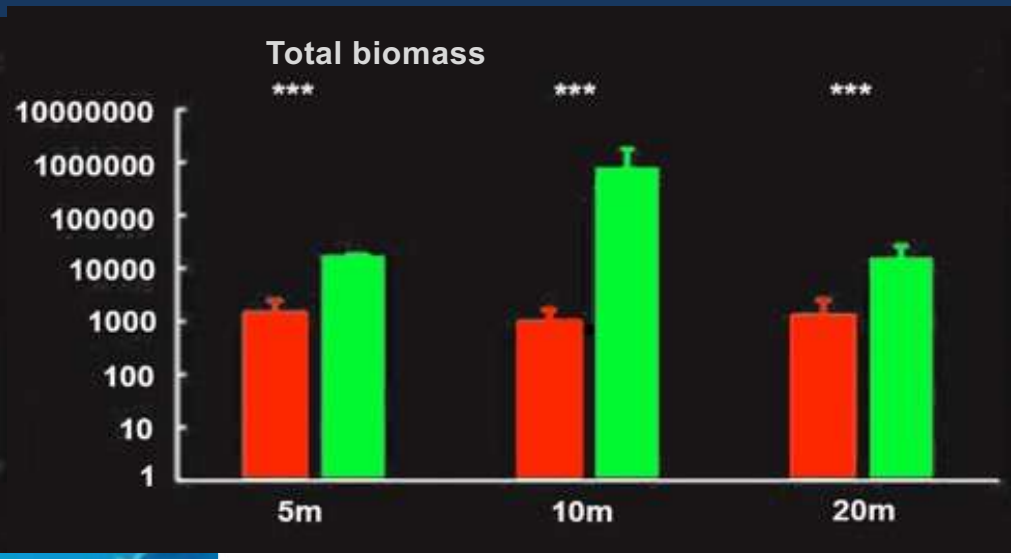


Diving frequentation in submarine caves. Effects on benthic invertebrates (Guarnieri et al., 2012)

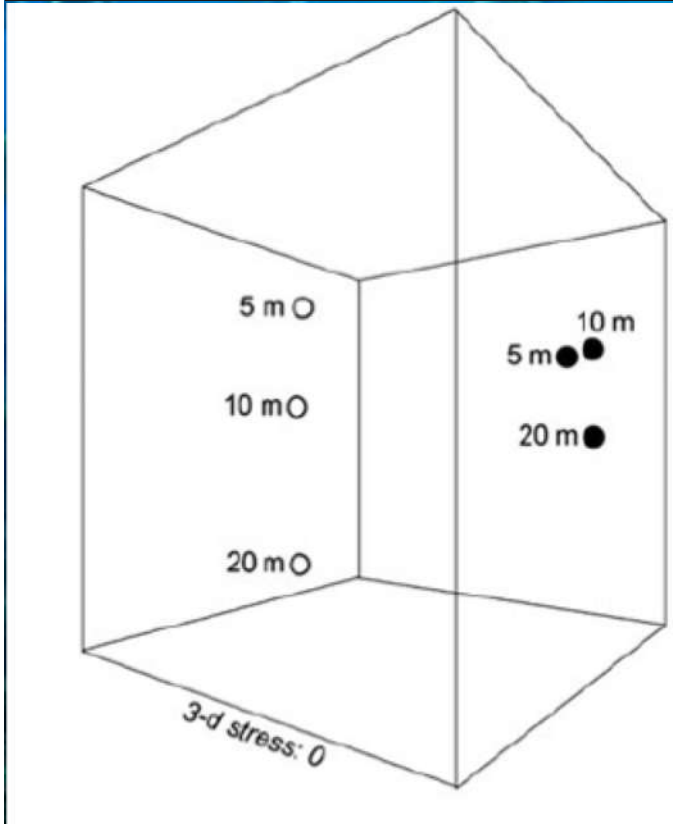
Fish assemblages

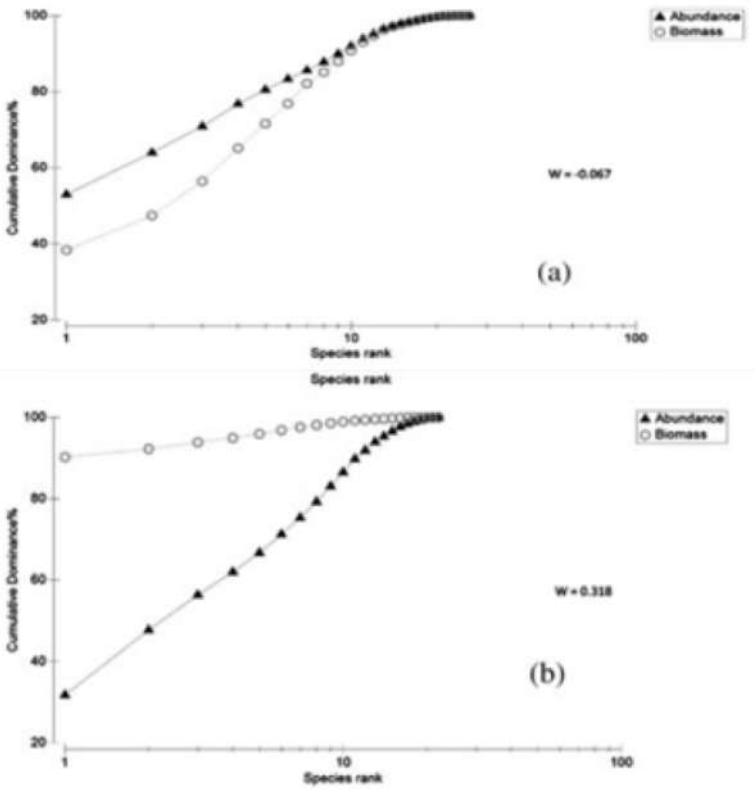
Effects of overfishing





Appolloni et al., 2017.

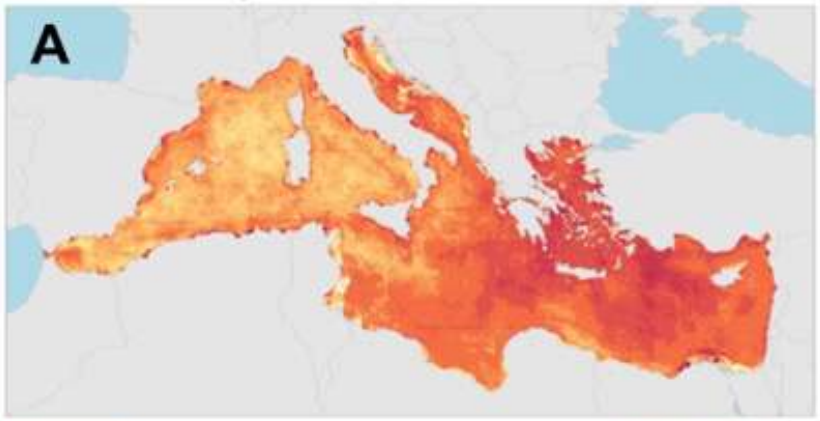




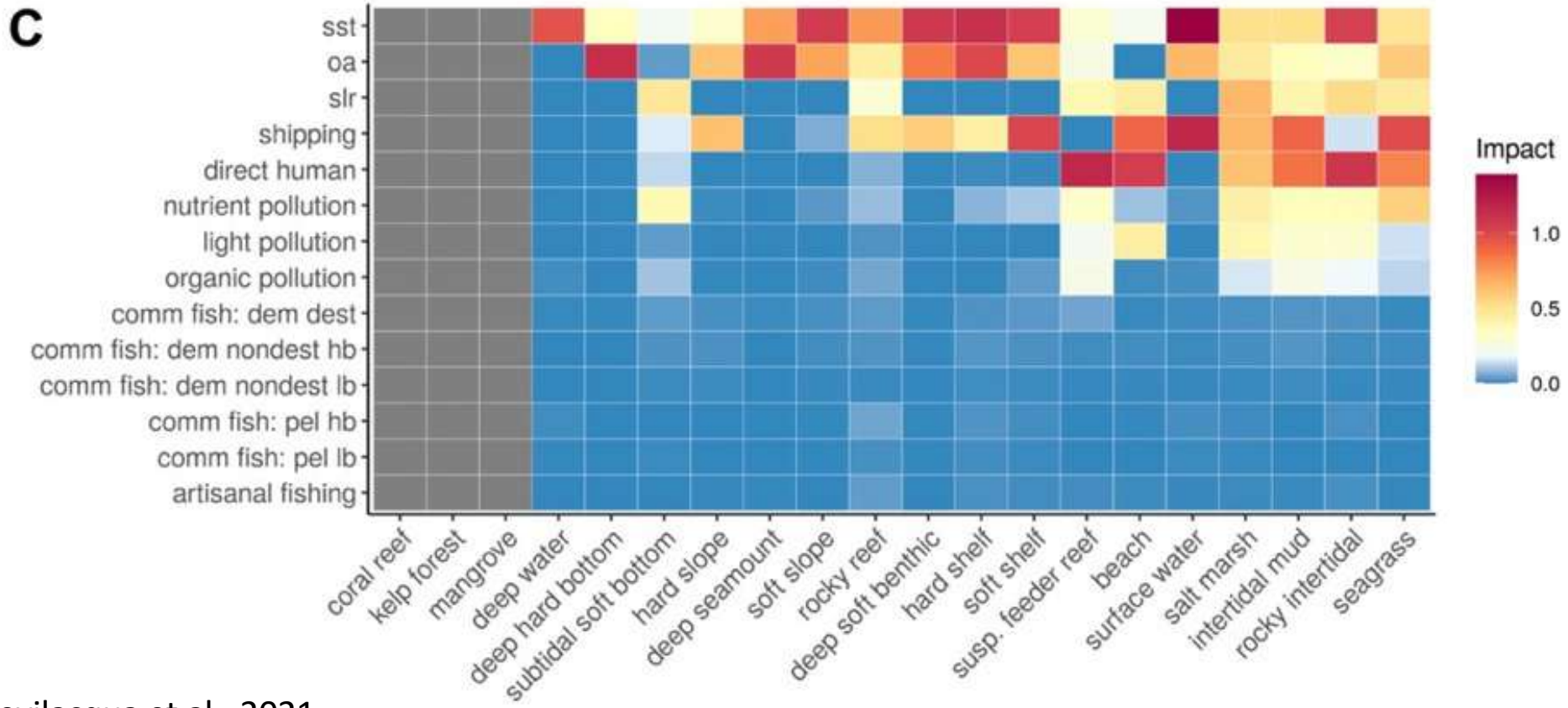
Main human threats

- Pollution
- Direct physical habitat disruption and artificialisation
- Overfishing
- Bioinvasions
- Climate change

Trends in cumulative impact



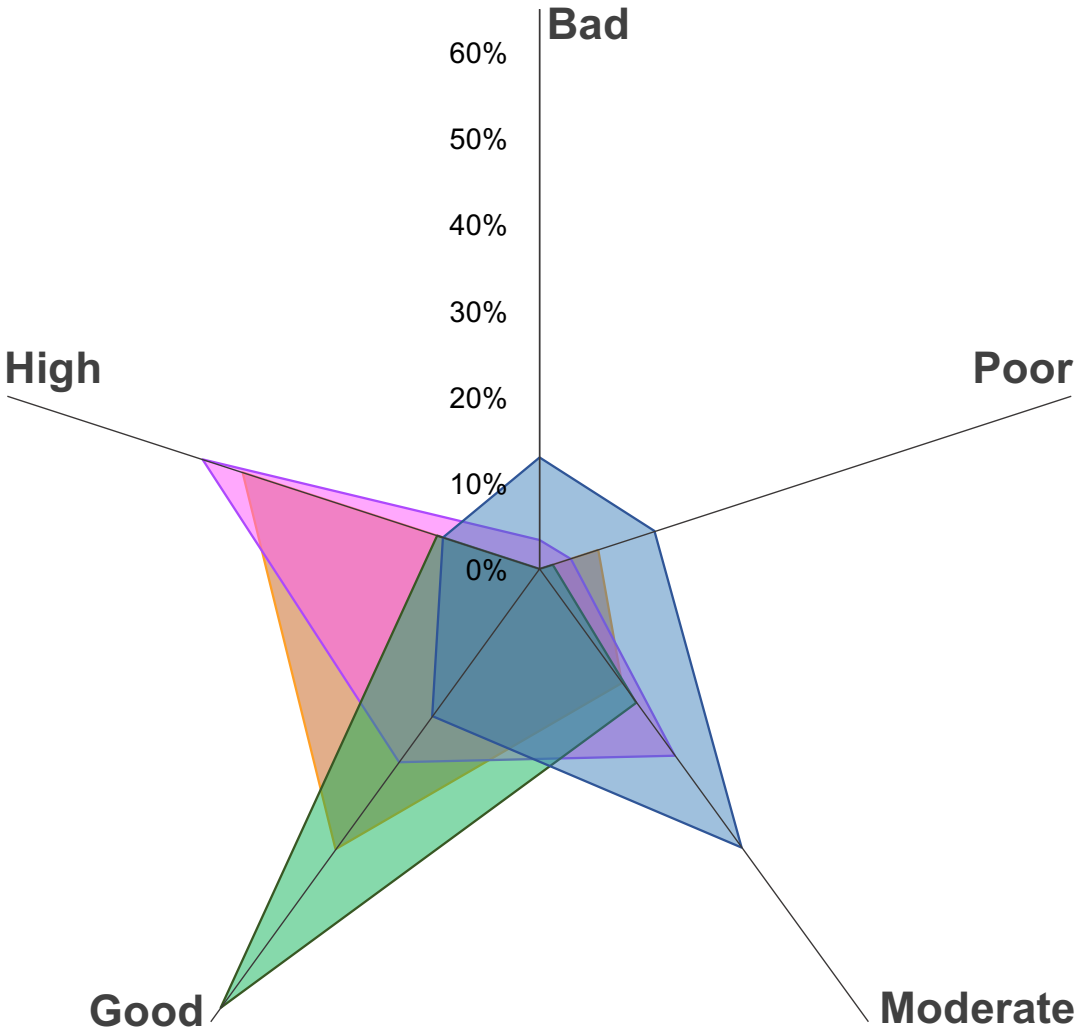
Climate drivers are the main contributors to increased cumulative impact to rocky reefs, but overfishing and pollution are also key drivers of increased Impact. Rocky reefs are impacted by the largest suite of different stressors

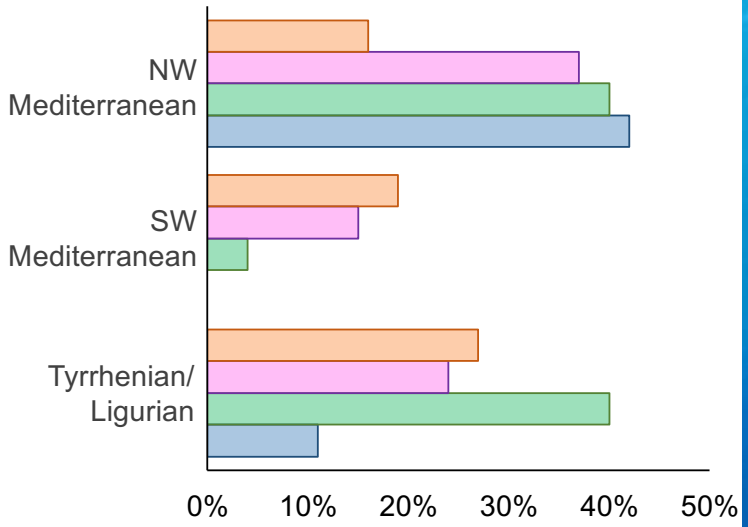


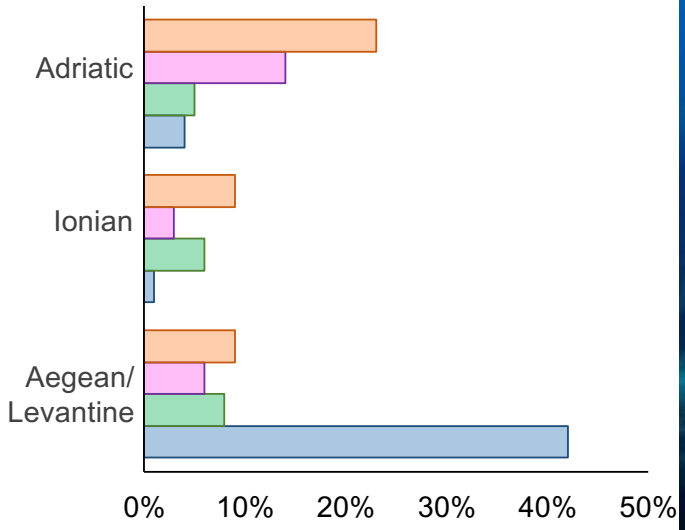
Bevilacqua et al., 2021

Ecological status

Bevilacqua et al., 2020







Coastal soft bottoms (CSB)

Rocky intertidal fringe (RIF)

P. oceanica beds (POS)

Shallow subtidal reefs (SSR)

CARLIT

Table 1
Summarized description and sensitivity levels of the main community categories distinguished in the monitored coasts

Category	Description	Sensitivity level
Cystoseira mediterranea 5	Continuous belt of *C. mediterranea/stricta*	20
Cystoseira crinita	Populations of *C. crinita*	20
Cystoseira balearica	Populations of *C. balearica*	20
Cystoseira sheltered	Populations of *Cystoseira foeniculacea/barbata/spinosa* v. *tenuior/compressa* v. *pustulata*	20
Posidonia reef	Barrier and fringing reefs of *Posidonia oceanica*	20
Cymodocea nodosa	*Cymodocea nodosa* meadows	20
Zostera noltii	*Zostera noltii* meadows	20
Trottoir	Build-ups of *Lithophyllum byssoides*	20
Cystoseira mediterranea 4	Almost continuous belt of *C. mediterranea/stricta*	19
Cystoseira mediterranea 3	Abundant patches of dense stands of *C. mediterranea/stricta*	15
Cystoseira mediterranea 2	Abundant scattered plants of *C. mediterranea/stricta*	12
Cystoseira compressa	Populations of *C. compressa* v. *compressa*	12
Cystoseira mediterranea 1	Rare scattered plants of *C. mediterranea/stricta*	10
Corallina	Belt of *Corallina elongata* without *Cystoseira*	8
Haliptilon	Belt of *Haliptilon virgatum*, without *Cystoseira*	8
Mytilus	Mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) beds, without *Cystoseira*	6
Encrusting corallines	Belt of *Lithophyllum incrustans*, *Neogoniolithon brassica-florida* and other encrusting corallines	6
Green algae	Upper sublittoral belts of *Ulva* and *Cladophora*	3
Blue greens	Communities dominated by Cyanobacteria and *Derbesia tenuissima*	1

Indicatore di stato per i popolamenti a macroalghe dell'intertidale roccioso basato su criteri di sensibilità relativi al tipo di specie e alla loro abbondanza.
Valore derivante da media pesata in funzione dell'estensione della costa caratterizzata dalle varie formazioni vegetali fratto il valore di riferimento per l'area.

Ballesteros et al. 2007

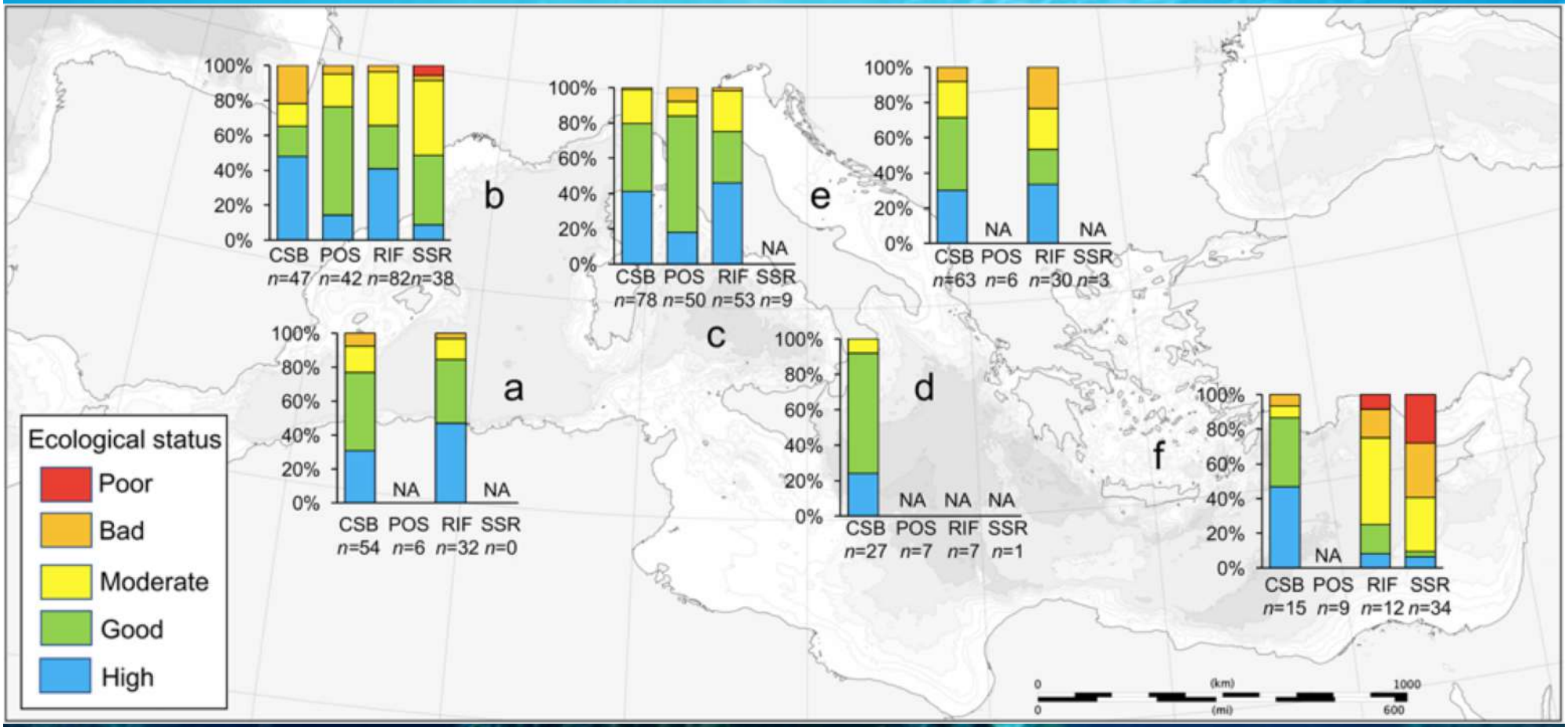
Reef-EBQI

Functional compartment	Weigh-ting (W)	Parameter	4	3	2	1	0
1- MPOs	15	Cover type	Arborescent perennial ≥50%	Arborescent perennial 5 to <50%	Shrubby ≥50%	Shrubby 5 to <50%	Turf Encrusting
2- Detritus-feeders	3	Density (individuals 10 m^{-2})	<0.5	0.5 to 1.0	1.1 to 2.0	2.1 to 5.0	>5.0
3- Filter- and suspension-feeders	2	Density (individuals 10 m^{-2})	<2.5	2.5 to 5.0	5.1 to 10.0	10.1 to 20.0	>20.0
4- Sea urchins	10	Density (individuals m^{-2})	0.05 to 1.0	<0.05	1.1 to 5.0	5.1 to 10.0	>10.0
5- Invertivorous invertebrates	3						
- *Octopus vulgaris, Marthasterias glacialis*		Density (individuals 200 m^{-2})	>1.0	0.6 to 1.0	0.3 to 0.5	0.1 to 0.2	<0.1
- *Hexaplex trunculus*		Density (individuals 10 m^{-2})	<0.5	0.6 to 1.0	1.1 to 2.0	2.1 to 4.0	>4.0
6- Herbivorous teleosts	4	Biomass kg teleosts WM 100 m^{-2}	1.1 to 3.0	3.1 to 4.0	>4.0	0.25 to 1.0	<0.25
7–8- Omnivorous and Invertivorous teleosts	4	Biomass kg teleosts WM 100 m^{-2}	>3.5	2.6 to 3.5	1.6 to 2.5	0.8 to 1.5	<0.8
9- Piscivorous teleosts	7	Biomass kg teleosts WM 100 m^{-2}	>5.0	1.0 to 5.0	0.5 to 0.9	0.4 to 0.1	<0.1
10- Planktivorous teleosts	1	Biomass kg teleosts WM 100 m^{-2}	>2.0	2.0 to 1.5	1.5 to 0.9	0.9 to 0.3	<0.3
11- Sea birds	1						
- *Phalacrocorax* spp.		Distance to the nearest nesting site (km)	<4.0	4.0 to 7.9	8.0 to 12.9	13.0 to 17.0	>17.0
- *Pandion haliaetus*		Distance to the nearest nesting site (km)	<4.0	4.0 to 7.9	8.0 to 12.9	13.0 to 17.0	>17.0

Indicatore di stato per gli ecosistemi di fondo duro superficiali (15 m) basato su differenti criteri relativi a diverse componenti dell'ecosistema e alla loro abbondanza o presenza. Valore derivante da media pesata in funzione dell'importanza ecologica delle varie componenti fratto il valore massimo raggiungibile.

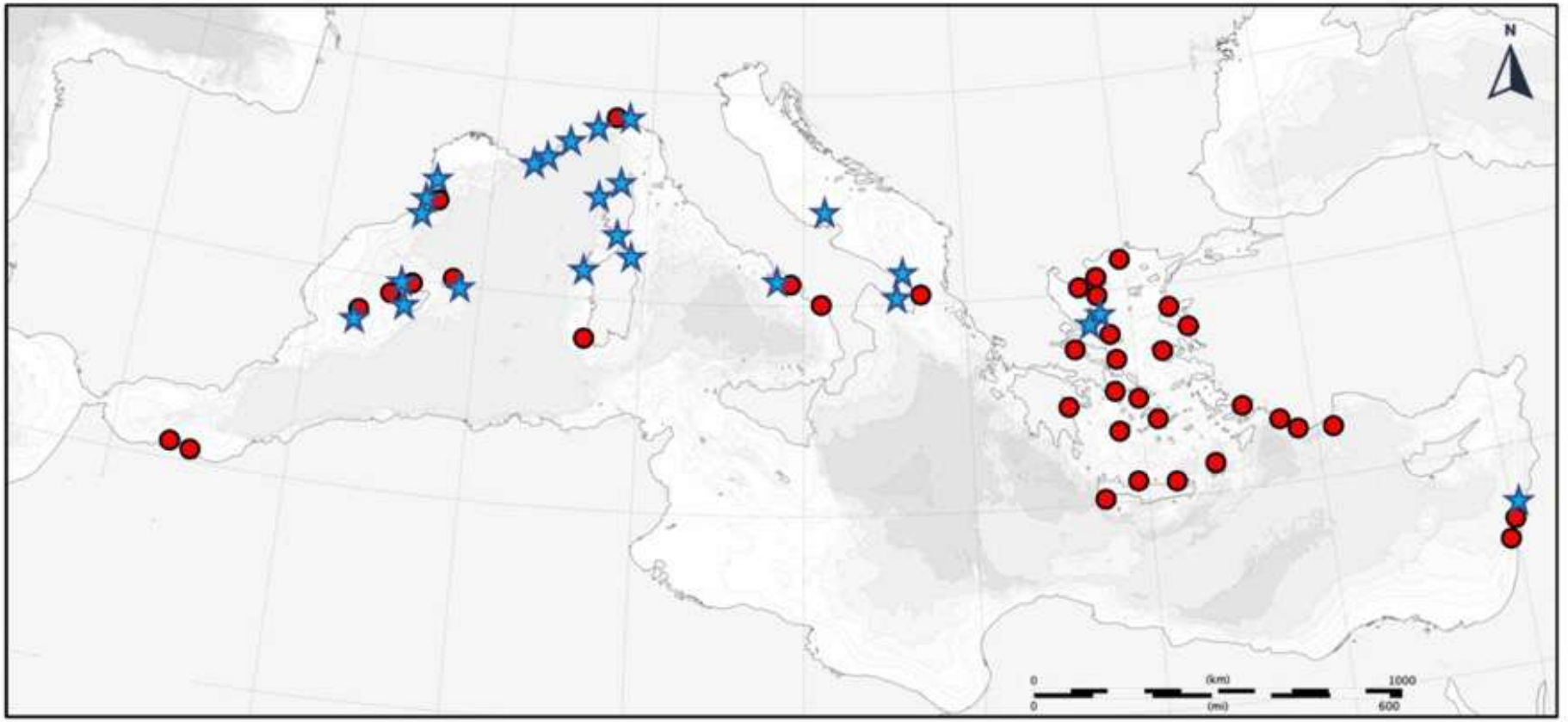
Thibaut et al. 2017

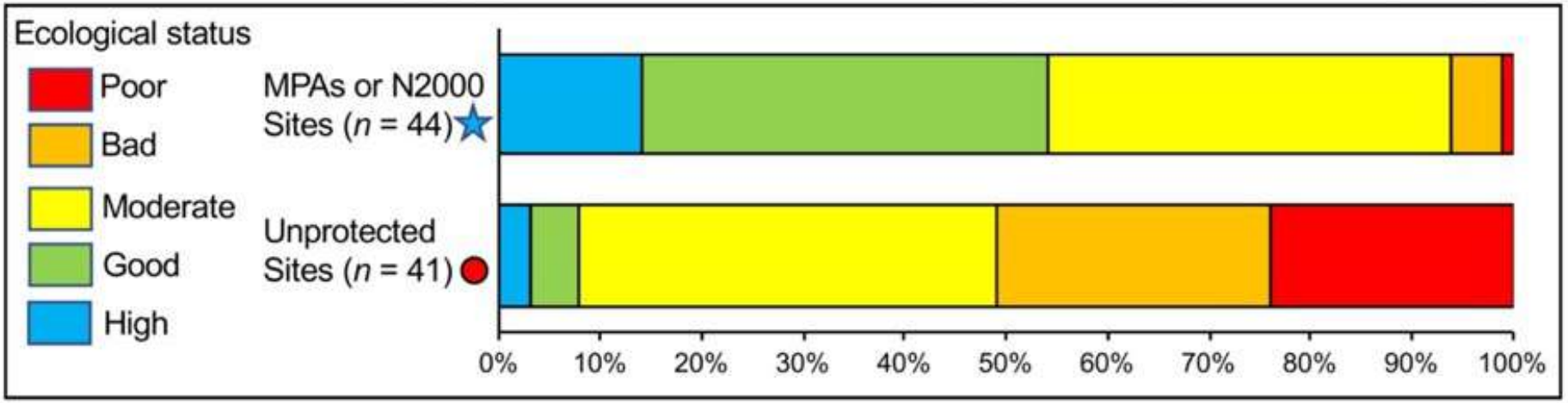
Ecological status



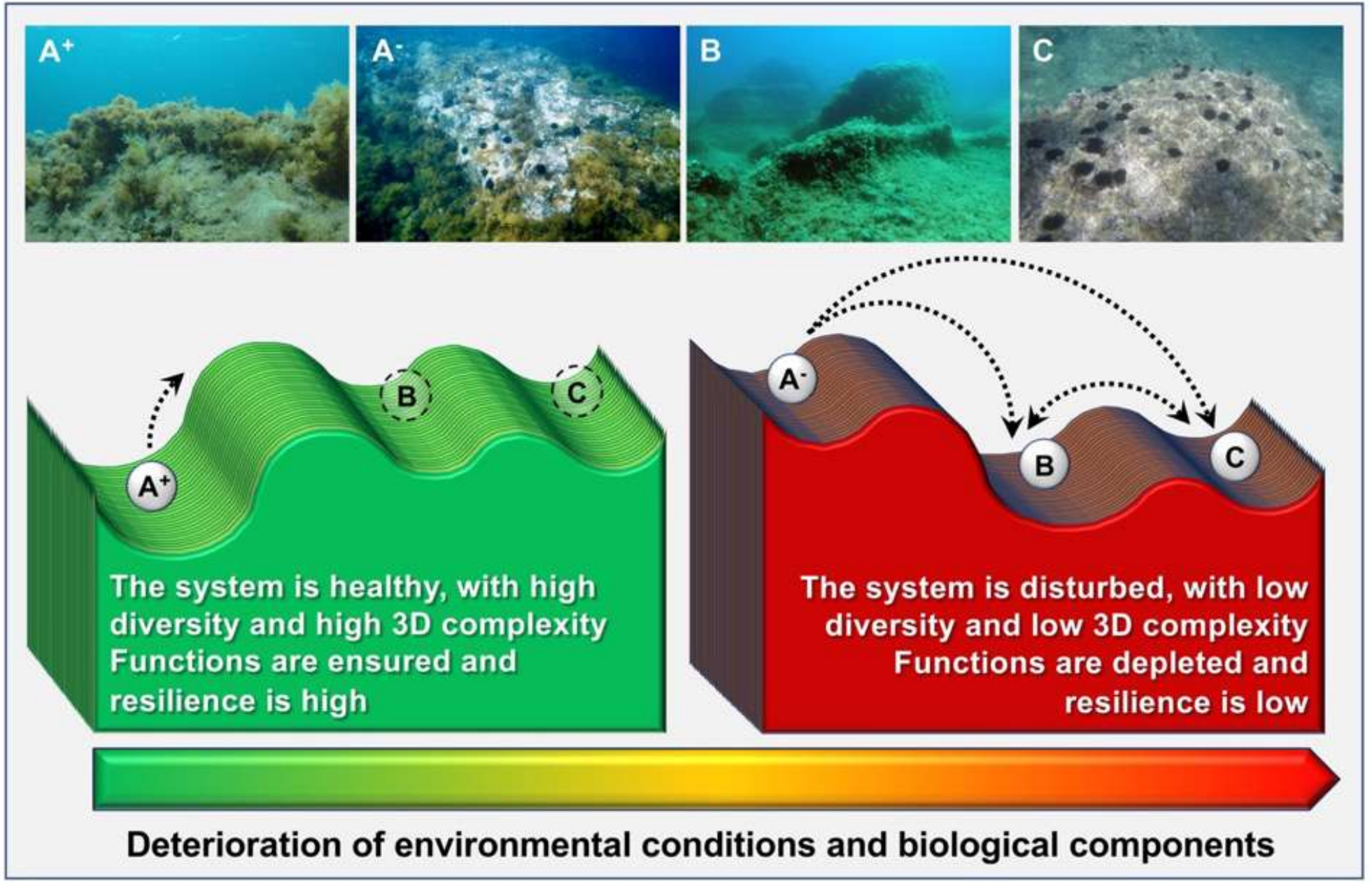
Lack of data in several areas. Apparently, rocky reefs in the Levant basin are those in worse conditions

Ecological status





Regime shifts



The role of climate change: invasions

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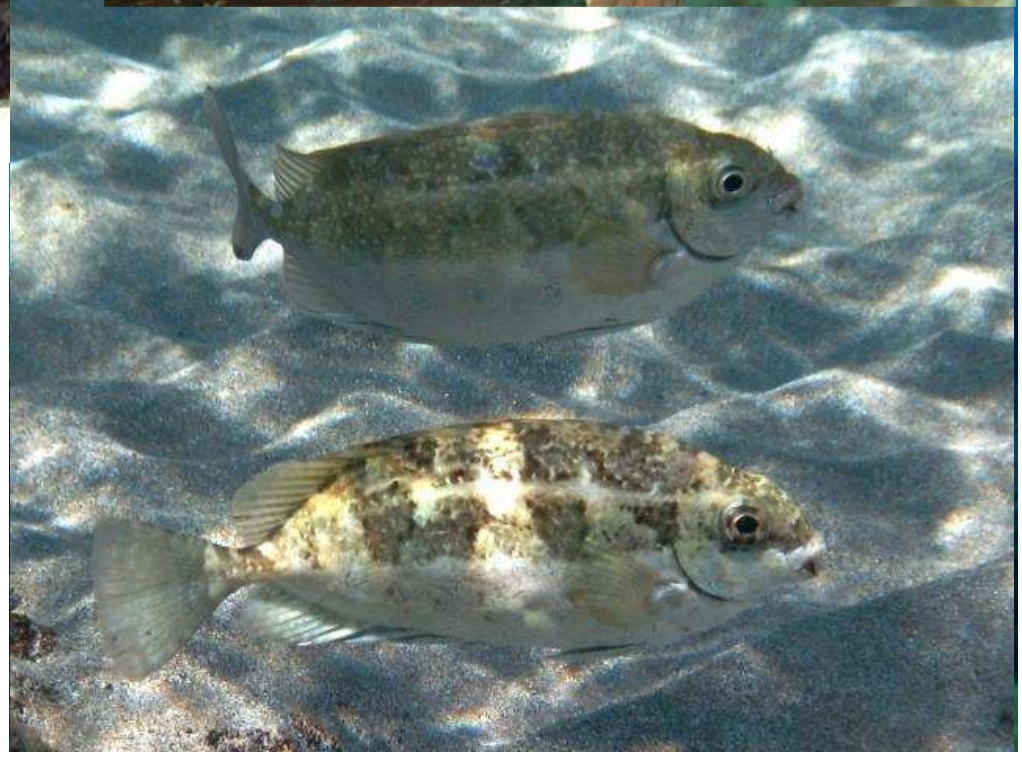
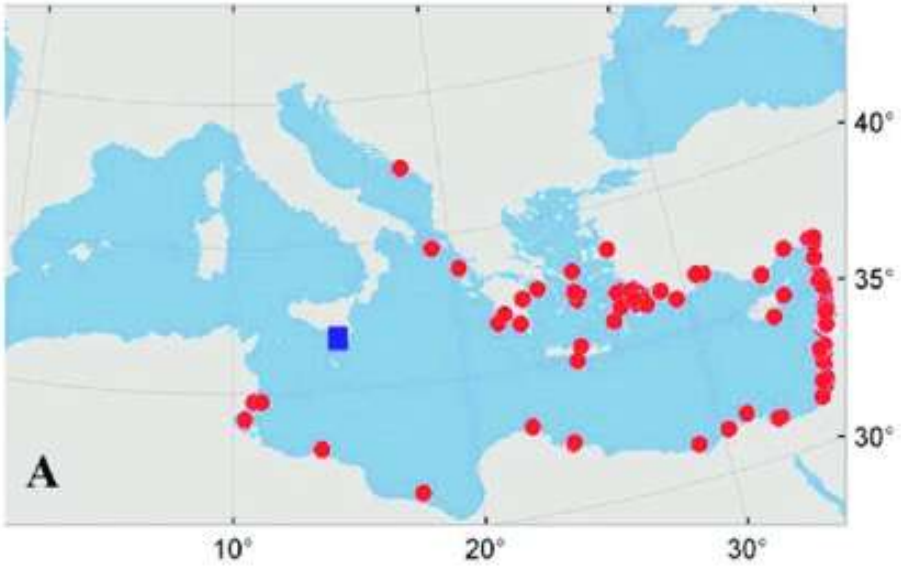


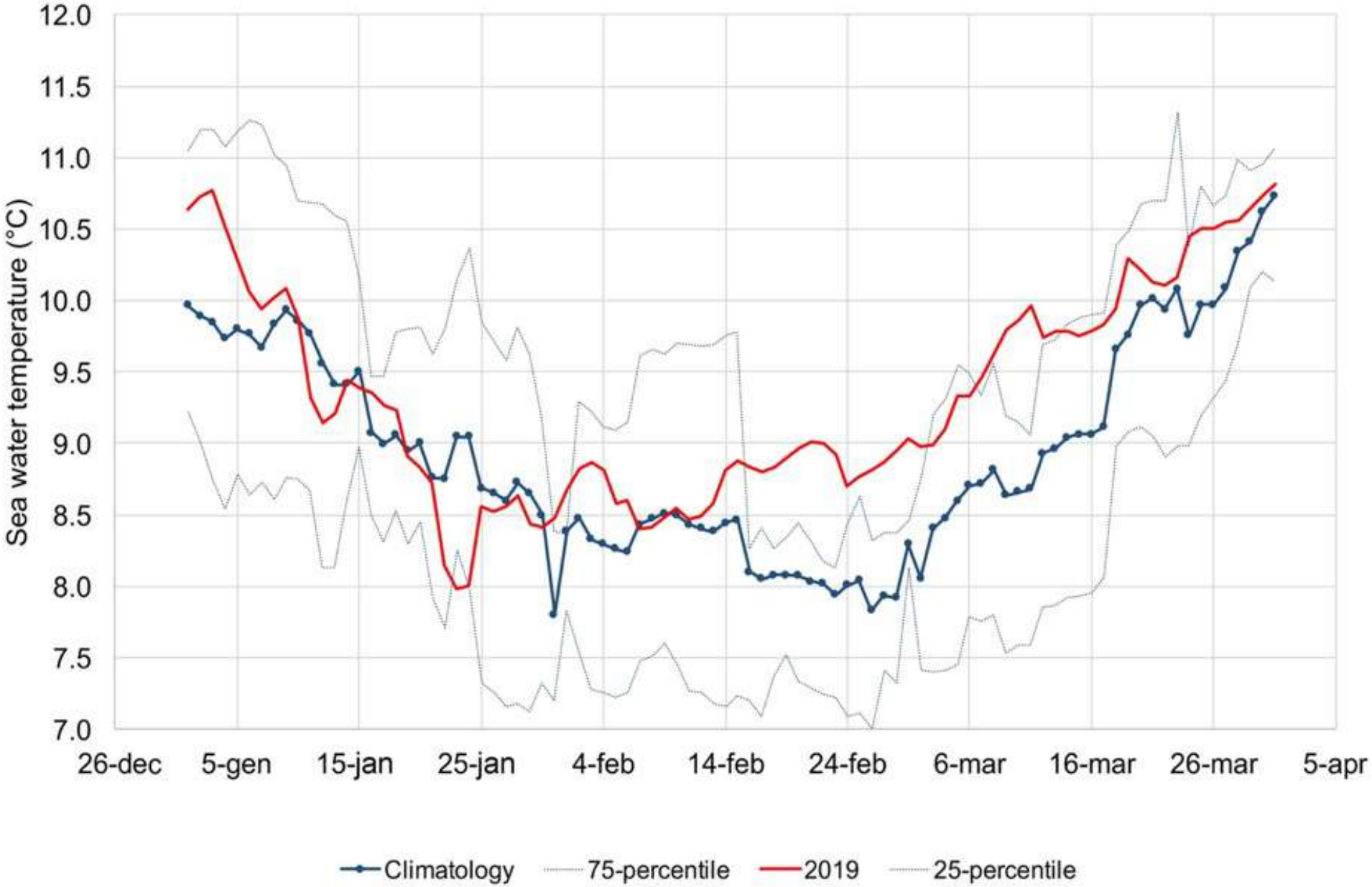


The role of climate change: heatwaves

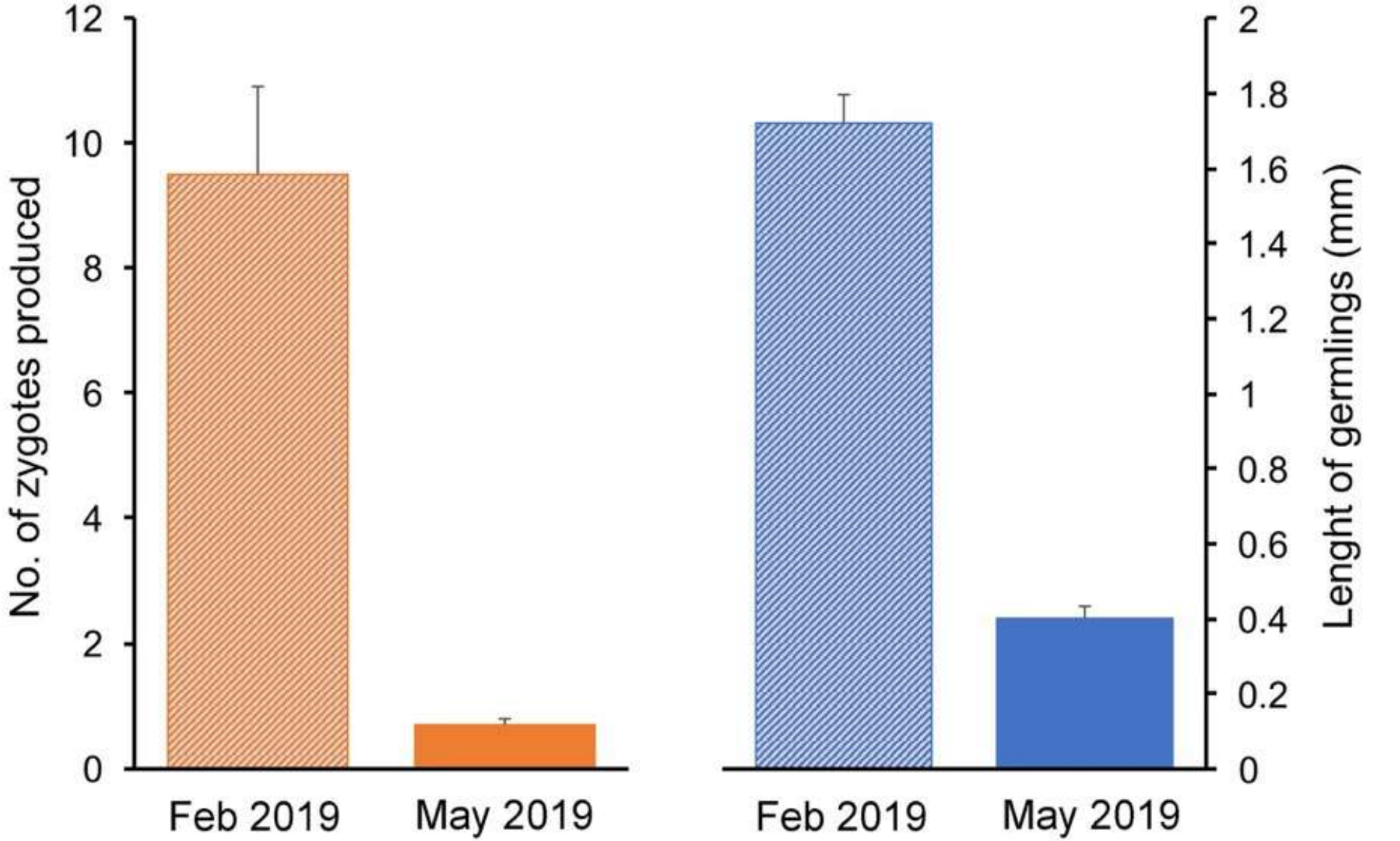
a

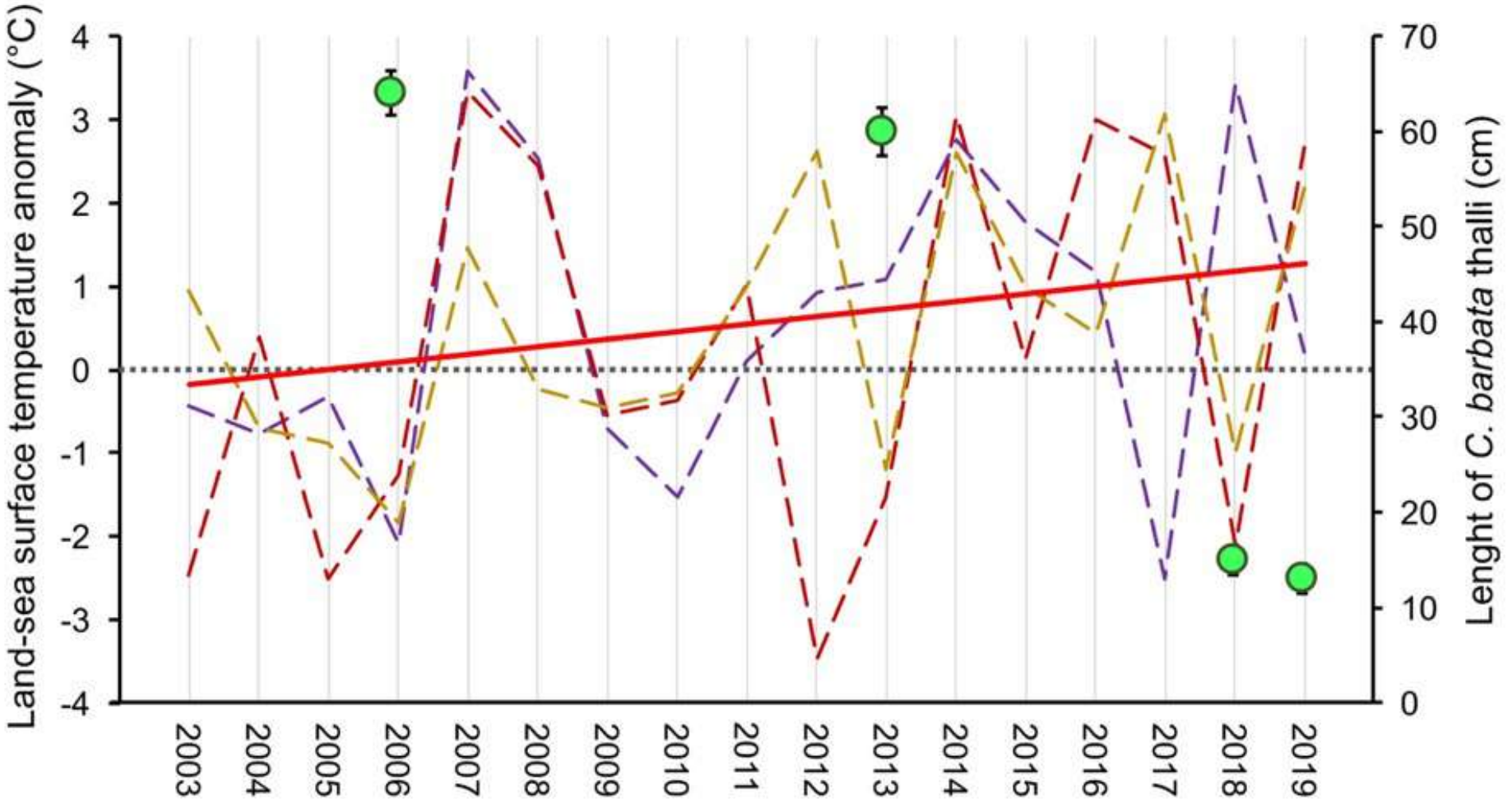
b

The role of climate change



The role of climate change



Bevilacqua et al., 2019

The role of climate change