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Ref.: 62/2020 Rome, 2 March 2020

MEDAC opinion about Recreational Fisheries (WG4) on relevant species[1]

The MEDAC has dealt with certain issues concerning recreational fisheries by defining a list of the species which are most significant for the recreational fisheries sector and/or for which conflict with professional fisheries in terms of gear used or catches is perceived.

There are no up-to-date data on the size of stocks for most of these species, and at the time of approval of this opinion there are no data on the impact of recreational fisheries on the species taken into consideration, it is therefore difficult to provide an opinion on the catch limits based on scientific data. This is underlined by the wide variety of contributions (considered as independent suggestions) received from the Working Group 4 (WG4) participants concerning restrictions to total catches. However, there is what can be termed the "actual fisheries" which is the real situation related to the fishing gear actually employed by the recreational fisheries sector and that used by Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) to capture these species; it has therefore been possible to identify the cases in which the gear used by both fishery sectors overlap, as highlighted in the table and graphs (attached) that are an integral part of this opinion.

As a result of this analysis, it has emerged that there is some overlap in the use of the following gears: long lines, traps, hand or hand dredges and hooks, in the percentage indicated in the graphs. In particular, highest level of overlap (considering the number of species and the number of replies received from the WG4 participants) relates to longlines, however there are critical issues concerning traps too, as a consequence of the commercial value that the professional sector attributes to some species caught with this gear, such as *Sepia officinalis*. Furthermore, during the debate in the framework of WG4, it emerged that there was some conflict regarding the use of electromechanical aids in recreational fisheries (e.g. electric reels) with particular reference to demersal species (*Pagello bogaraveo*).

In this regard the MEDAC therefore believes that it is necessary to:

- Ban the use of passive gear (longlines, traps) and electromechanical aids (electric reels) in recreational fisheries[2,3].

[1] CEPESCA, FACOPE and FNCP voted against this opinion.

[2] FIPSAS, CIPS and FIPIA opposed the ban on the use of passive gear and electromechanical aids in recreational fisheries. EAA and IFSUA are opposed to a ban of electromechanical aids because the socio and economic impact of such a ban should be taken into account, E.g. some disabled anglers would suffer from such a ban (social inclusion).

[3] Federpesca supports the prohibition of all the professional gears included in the art.2 of Italian M.D. 12/06/2012, excepted LHP (hand line and rod and line without electro-mechanical support) and LTL (trolling).

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The WG4 also worked on the following issues, in relation to which the MEDAC considers it appropriate to express its point of view:

1. The introduction of Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes[4] (MCRS) for the recreational capture of the species indicated in the list.
2. The introduction in the EU Technical Measures Regulation of definitive total catch limits for the species indicated in the list.

With reference to point 1 the MEDAC:

- believes that this should be defined on the basis of scientific data, the MEDAC does not therefore intend to suggest any specific size, however it is deemed necessary to introduce a Minimum[5] Conservation Reference Size for Recreational Fisheries[6] for each of the species in the list which takes into account the size at first sexual maturity (based on of the most up-to-date scientific data available), so as to allow each of these species at least one reproductive cycle before capture.

With reference to point 2, the MEDAC thinks that it would be difficult to reach an agreement in order to provide precise indications on the daily total catch limits without stock assessment, given the wide variety of contributions provided by the working group participants on this topic (reference is made to the graphs attached), however:

- the MEDAC believes that stock assessment is necessary for each of the species on the list and that a daily total catch limit should be introduced (for each individual fisher) in terms of the number of specimens of each species, which should not, in any case, exceed a daily quantity in terms of total weight, or one single specimen of a greater weight[7].

Furthermore, the MEDAC reiterates that it is in favour of the following, as already stated in previous MEDAC opinions:

- The introduction into European legislation of mandatory authorisation[8] for Recreational Fisheries at sea throughout the Mediterranean basin.

[4] WWF suggests not only a minimum but also a maximum MCRS, a maximum size is intended to have a positive impact in terms of spawning capacity.
[5] WWF suggests not only a minimum but also a maximum MCRS, a maximum size is intended to have a positive impact in terms of spawning capacity.
[6] FIPSAS and CIPS do not consider the introduction of minimum catch sizes for recreational fisheries to be acceptable unless the same sizes are applied to the commercial fisheries sector.
[7] FIPIA and IFSUA ask for the total catch limit in Kg to be applied according to the limits that are currently in force in the respective countries (Italy – Spain) plus one fish. FIPSAS asks for the total catch limit in Kg to be applied according to the limits that are currently in force in Italy.
[8] WWF prefers the term “license” instead of “authorization”.

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- The introduction of legislative and economic tools in order to improve efforts to tackle, and possibly to eradicate, the problem of illegal trade of fish products by fishers who do not have a commercial licence.
- It is necessary to start an evaluation of the impact of the catches from Recreational Fishing on the stocks in each of the Member States, as well as a socio economics evaluation related to Recreational Fisheries.
- The introduction of mandatory "user friendly" electronic tools (such as smartphone apps) to record catches and to notify fishing trips at sea using a vessel.
- Extending the application of the ban on fishery operations in Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs) to Recreational Fisheries[9] too.
- Measures to identify catches from Recreational Fisheries by means of ablation of the lower part of the caudal fin.

[9] EAA and IFSUA are against a blunt ban on rod and line in FRA without scientific evidence of the impact on the FRA if other fishing gears or fisheries are allowed. EAA has adopted a position on MPAs, which covers FRAs, which can be read here: www.eaa-europe.org/positions/marine-protected-areas-2018.html (version Oct 2019).

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MEDAC WG4 - STEP 2				
SPECIES	**EU SIZE Reg. 2019/1241 Annex IX T.L. cm**	**GEARS USED BY RF (1)**	**GEARS USED BY SSF (2)**	**CONFLICTS ON GEARS OVERLAP (3)**
Coryphaena hippurus(*)	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns	Set nets - purse seine - FAD - Hooks (trolling lines) - longline	
Dentex dentex	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline - traps	Set nets - purse seine - longline	
Dicentrarchus labrax	25	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Set nets - longline	
Diplodus spp				
Diplodus annularis	12	Hooks (rod or handline)	Set nets - longline - traps	
Diplodus puntazzo	18	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Set nets - longline - traps	
Diplodus sargus	23	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Set nets - longline - traps	
Diplodus vulgaris	18	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Set nets - longline - traps	
Epinephelus spp	45	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Set nets - longline	
Galeorhinus galeus (*)	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - longline	Set nets	
Lichia amia	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns	Set nets - longline	
Loligo vulgaris (*)	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline)	Purse seine - Set nets - Hooks	
Merlangius merlangus(*)	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline)	Set nets - longline	
Octopus vulgaris	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - traps	Set nets - traps	
Pagellus bogaraveo	33	Hooks (rod or handline)	Longline	
Pagellus erythrinus(*)	15	Hooks (rod or handline) - longline	Set nets - longline	
Pagrus pagrus (*)	18	Hooks (rod or handline) - longline	Set nets - longline	
Pomatomus saltatrix	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns	Set nets - longline	

MEDAC WG4 - STEP 2				
SPECIES	**EU SIZE Reg. 2019/1241 Annex IX T.L. cm**	**GEARS USED BY RF (1)**	**GEARS USED BY SSF (2)**	**CONFLICTS ON GEARS OVERLAP (3)**
Sciaena umbra	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Set nets - longline	
Scomber scombrus (*)	18	Hooks (rod or handline)	Purse seine - set nets - longline	
Scorpaena scrofa (*)	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline- traps	Purse seine - set nets - longline	
Sepia officinalis	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - speargun - traps	Set nets - traps	
Seriola dumerili	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns	Set nets - longline - traps	
Sparus aurata	20	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Purse seine - set nets - longline	
Spicara flexuosa (*)	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline)	Set nets	
Trachurus mediterraneus (*)	15	Hooks (rod or handline)	Purse seine - set nets - longline	
Umbrina cirrosa	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline) - spearguns - longline	Purse seine - set nets - longline	
Zeus faber (*)	n.d.	Hooks (rod or handline)	Set nets - longline	
Paracentrotus lividus (*)	n.d.	Hand	Hand	
Donax trunculus (*)	n.d.	Hand dredges	Boat dredges - hand dredge	

2) In order to simplify, the WG4 Coordinator chose to include each commercial gear in macro group, which is enough for the purpose of this job, according the following:
SET NETS group includes: GNS, GTN, GTR
LONGLINE group includes: LLS, LLD
PURSE SEINE group includes: PS, LA
TRAPS group includes: FIX, FPO
HOOKS group includes: LTL, LX

3) In this column it is highlighted the conflict on gears used by both RF and SSf: **GREEN** means no conflict, **YELLOW** means conflict on gears mainly used by RF (SSF trolling line) or "no gears" (hand), **RED** means conflict on gears mainly used by commercial sector (longlines, traps)

WG 4 – Recreational Fishery

Contributions on MCRS, gears overlapping between RF and SSF, Daily bag limits

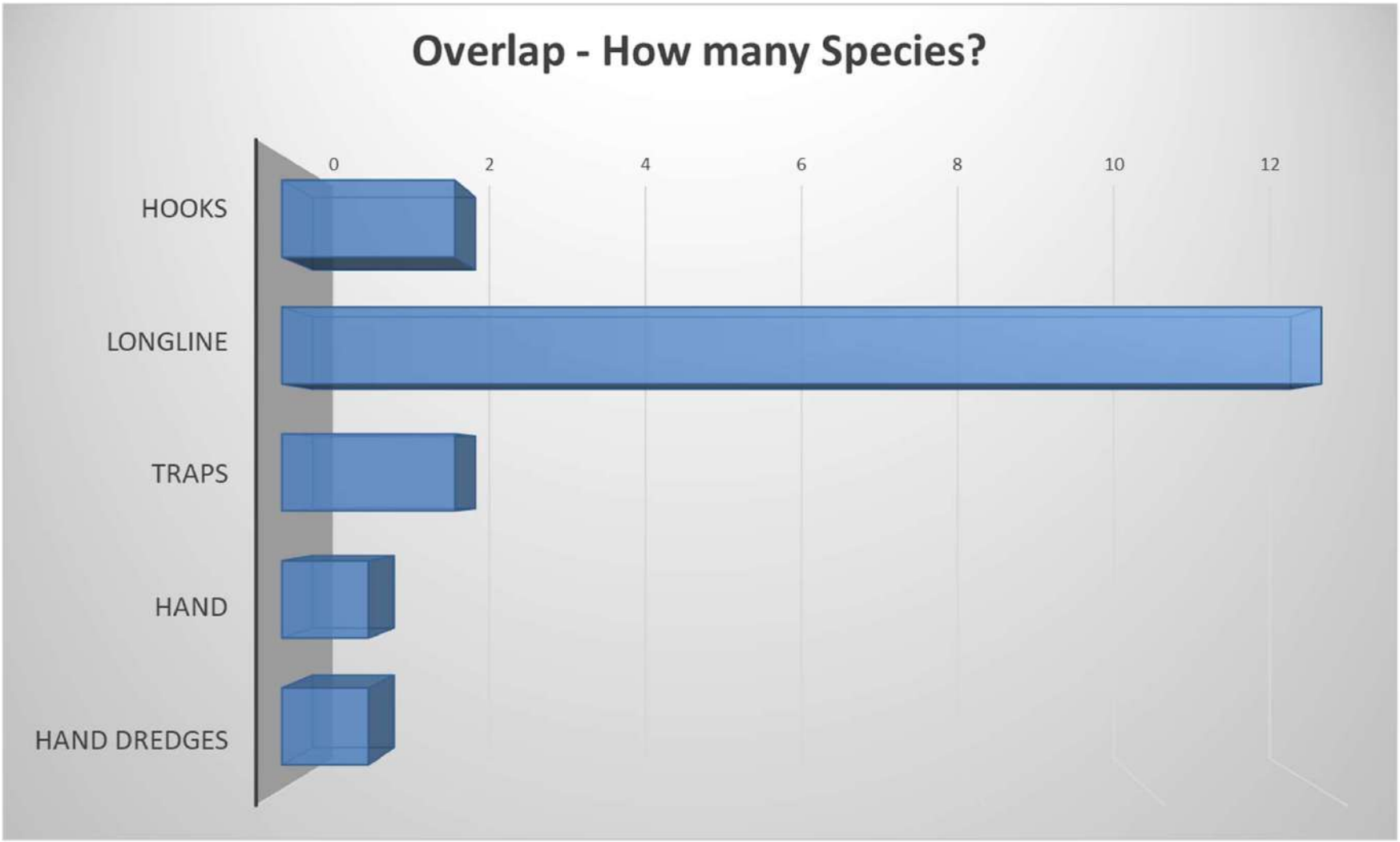
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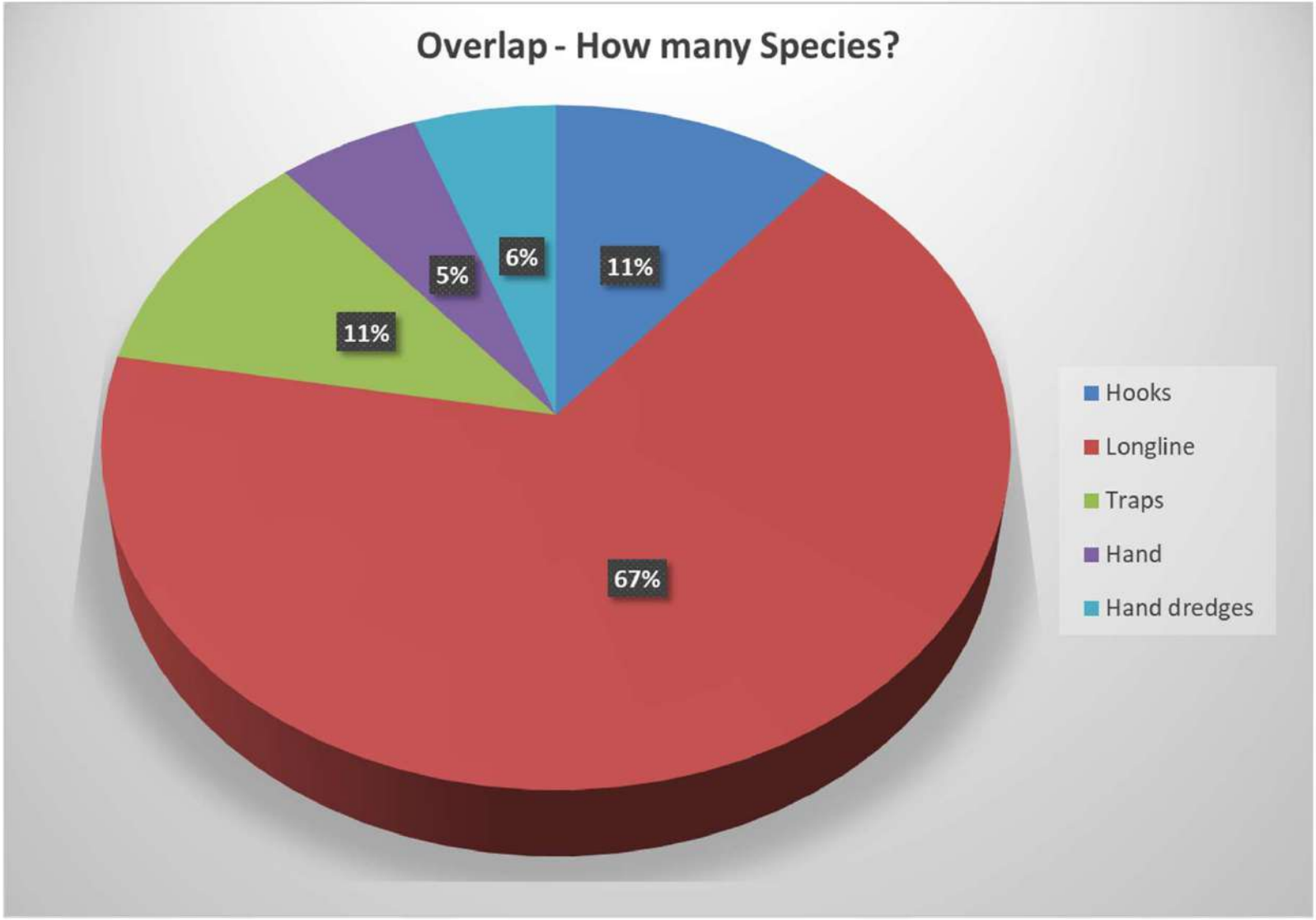
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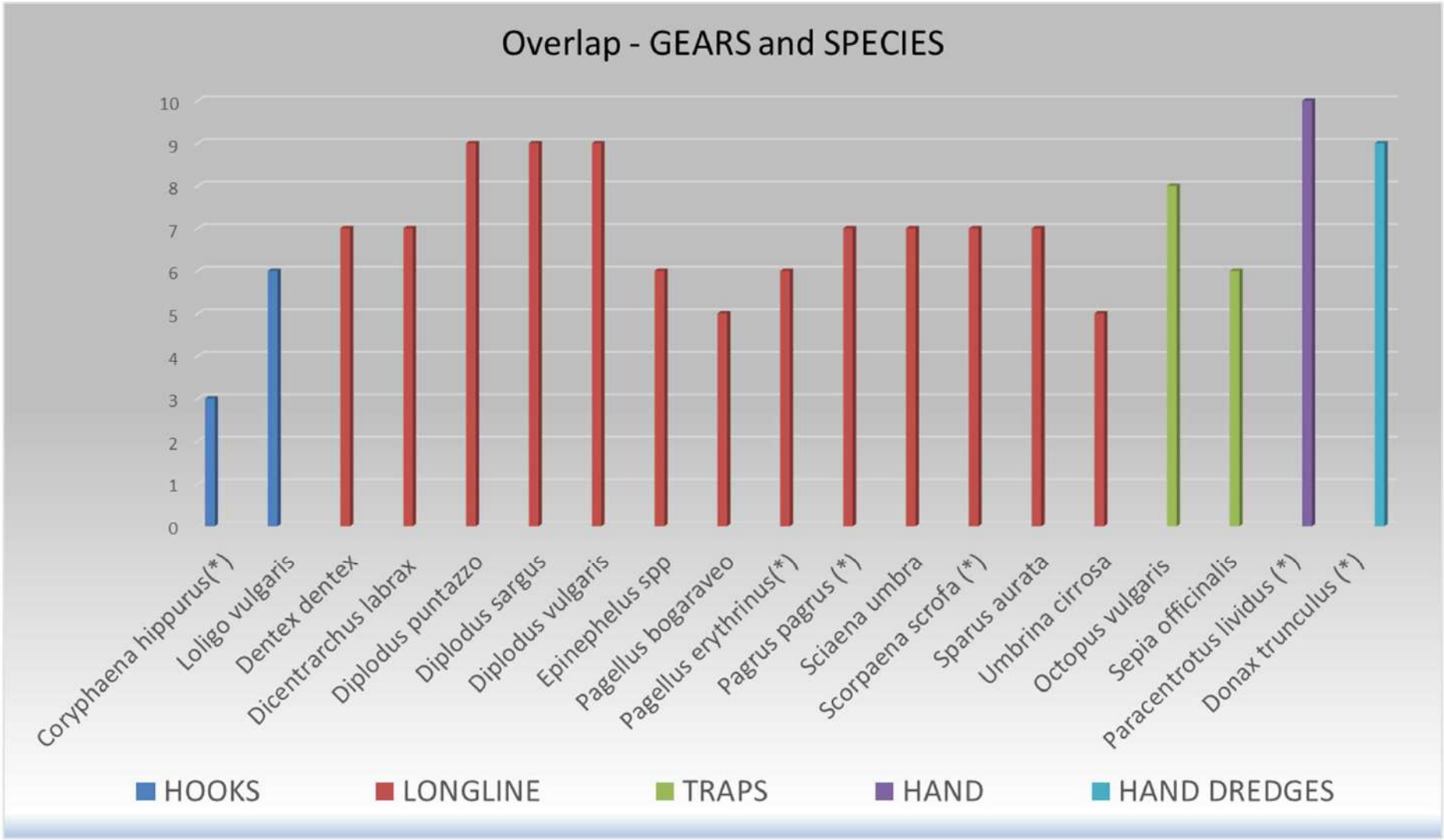
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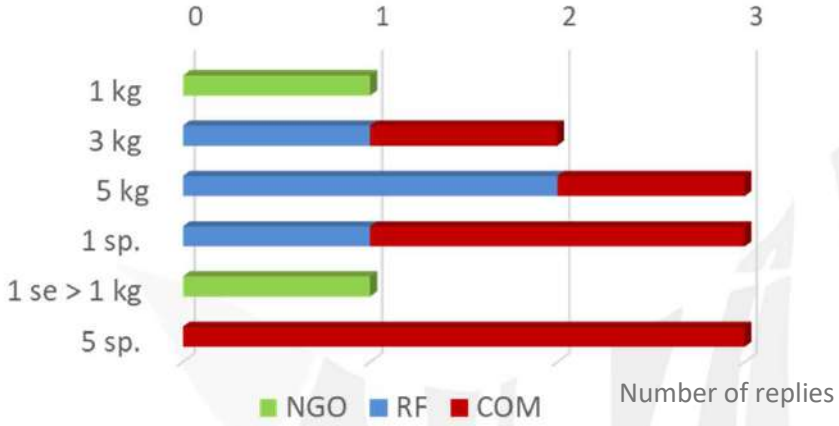
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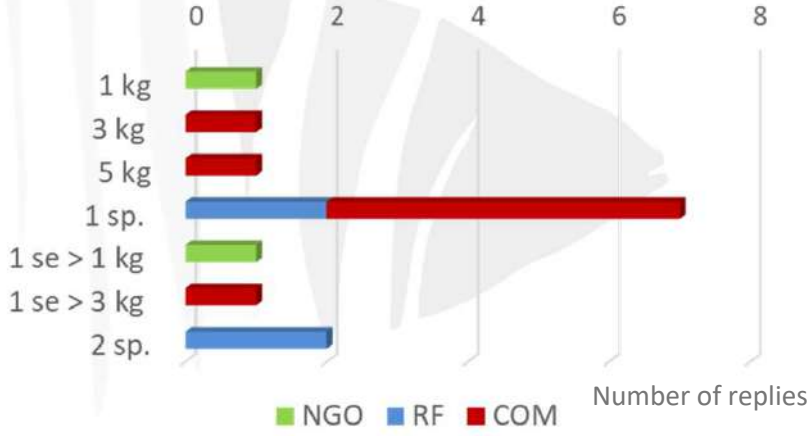


DAILY BAG

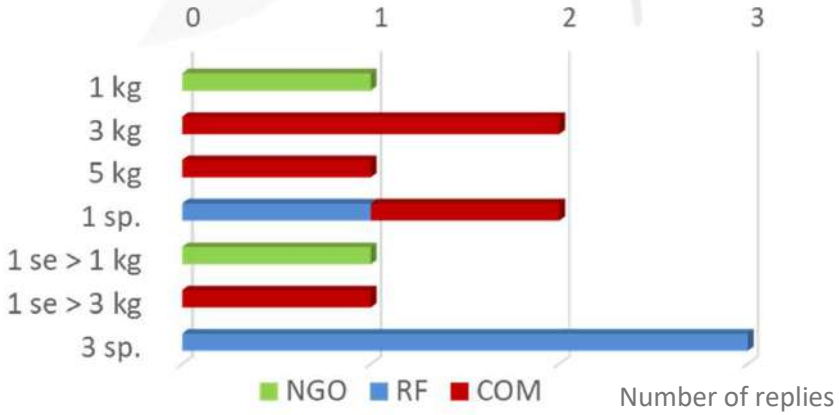
Coryphaena hippurus

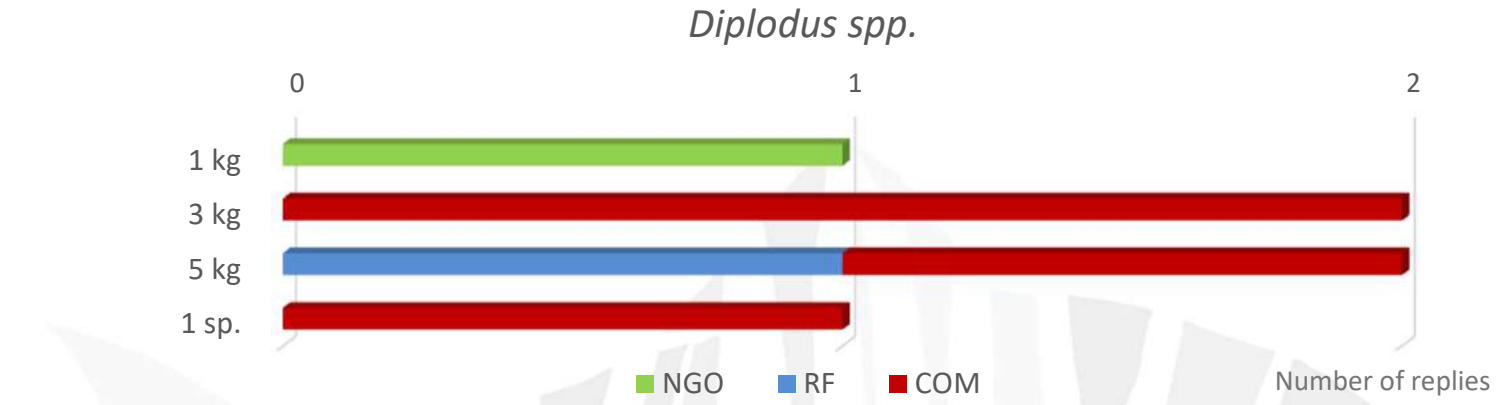


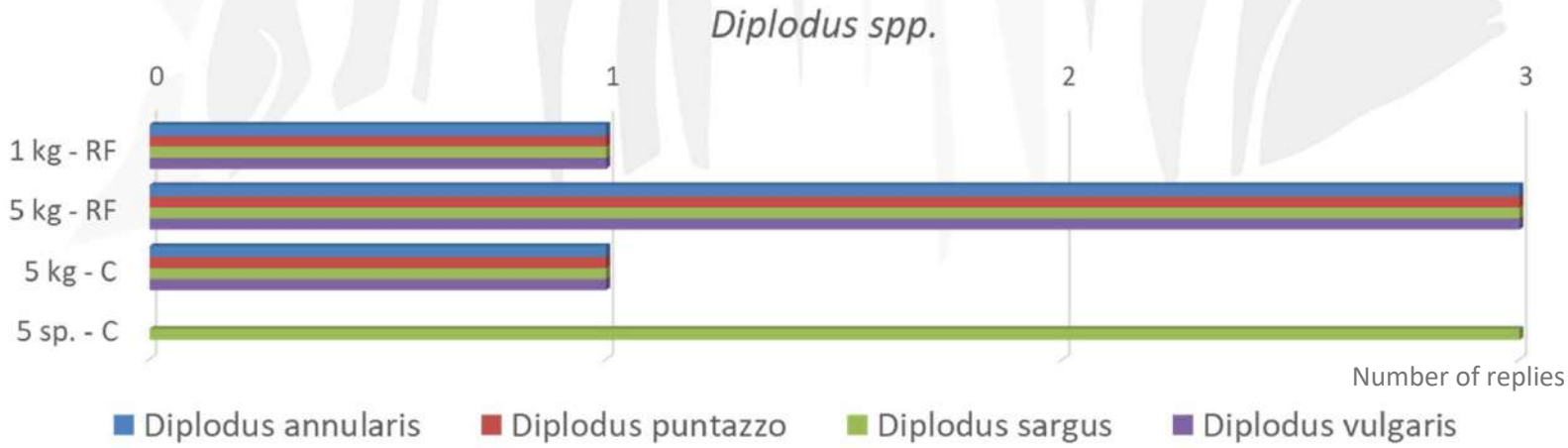
Dentex dentex



Dicentrarchus labrax

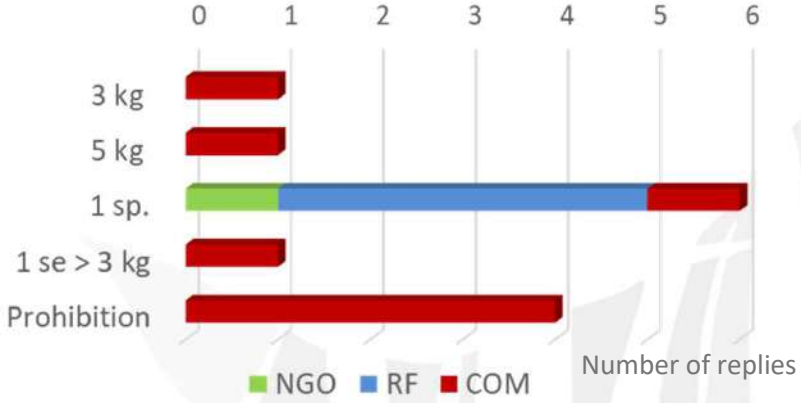



Diplodus spp.
0
1
2
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
NGO
RF
COM
Number of replies

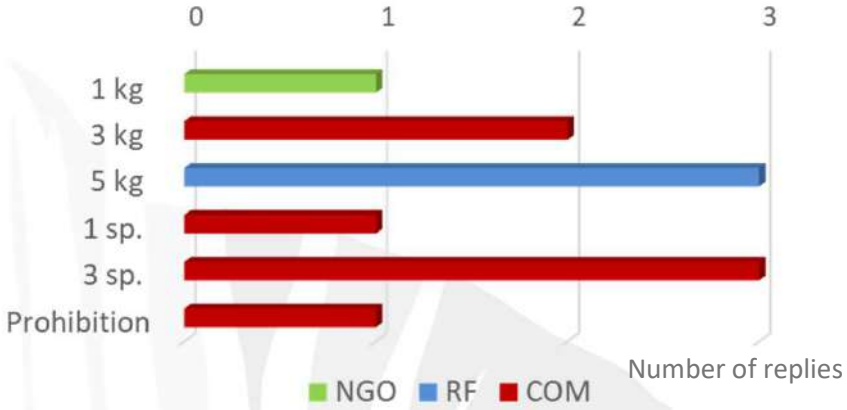

Diplodus spp.
0
1
2
3
1 kg - RF
5 kg - RF
5 kg - C
5 sp. - C
Number of replies
Diplodus annularis
Diplodus puntazzo
Diplodus sargus
Diplodus vulgaris

DAILY BAG

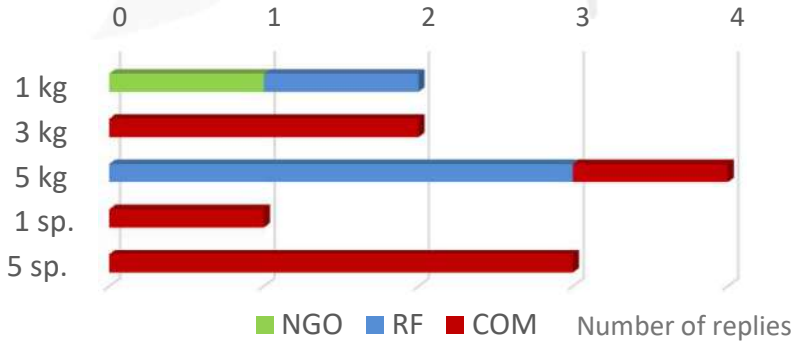
Epinephelus spp.



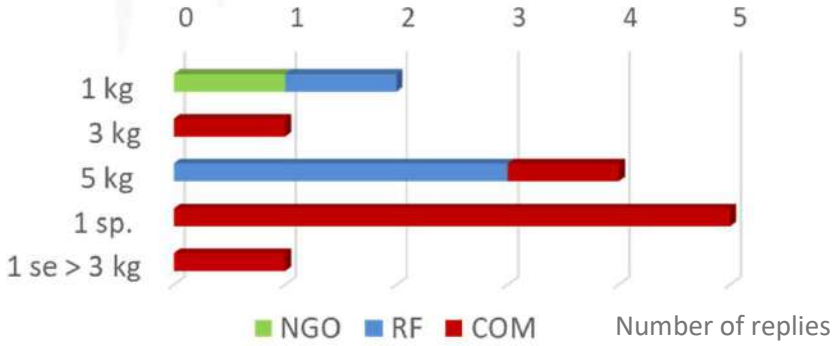
Pagellus bogaraveo



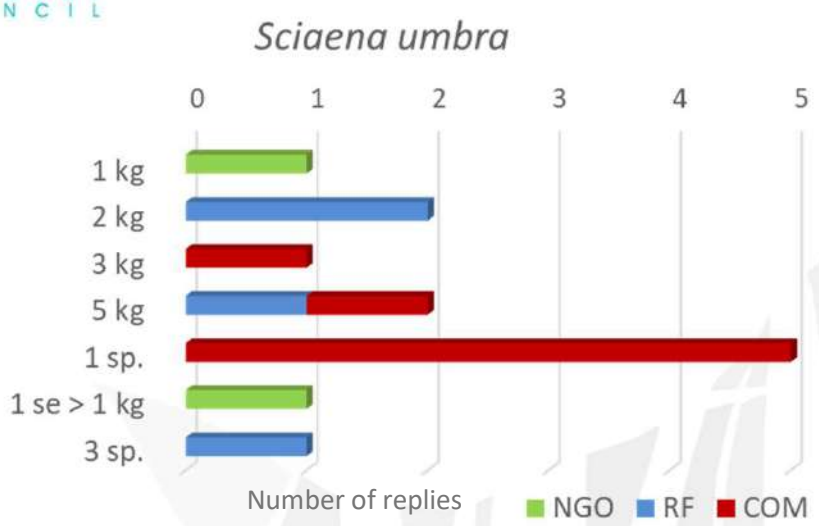
Pagellus erythrinus

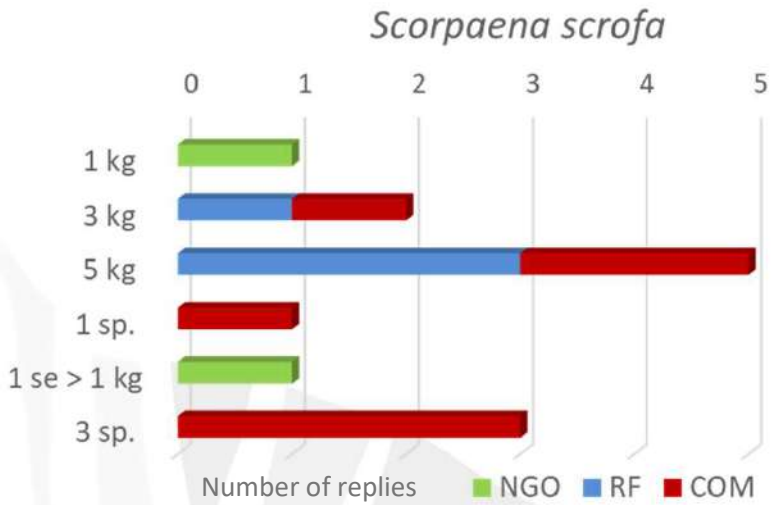


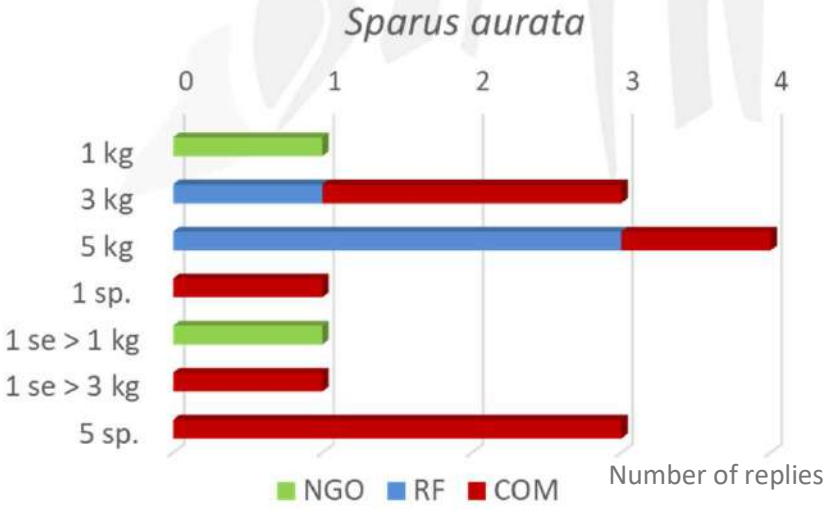
Pagrus pagrus

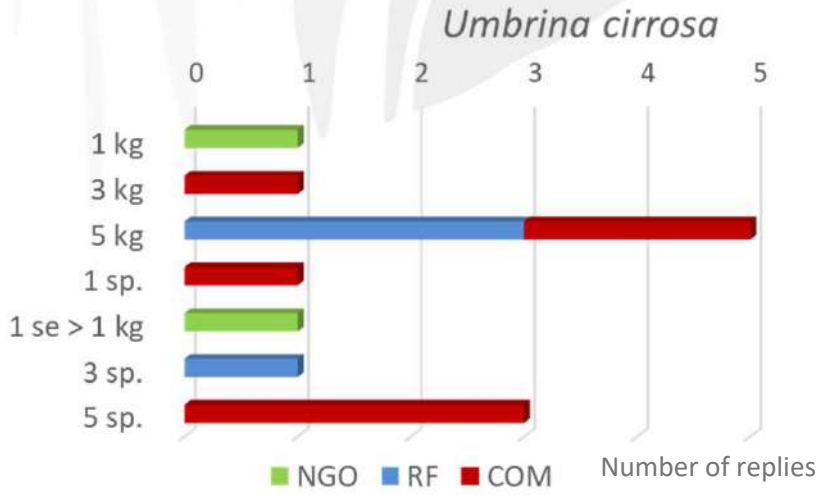


DAILY BAG


Sciaena umbra
0
1
2
3
4
5
1 kg
2 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
1 se > 1 kg
3 sp.
Number of replies
NGO
RF
COM


Scorpaena scrofa
0
1
2
3
4
5
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
1 se > 1 kg
3 sp.
Number of replies
NGO
RF
COM


Sparus aurata
0
1
2
3
4
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
1 se > 1 kg
1 se > 3 kg
5 sp.
NGO
RF
COM
Number of replies


Umbrina cirrosa
0
1
2
3
4
5
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
1 se > 1 kg
3 sp.
5 sp.
NGO
RF
COM
Number of replies

DAILY BAG

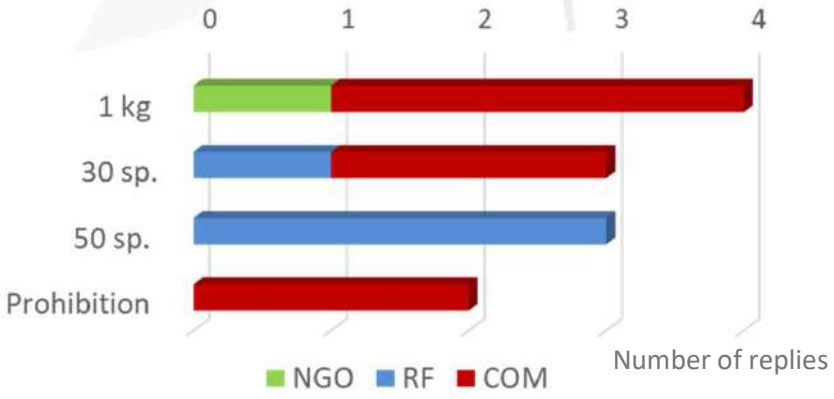
Octopus vulgaris



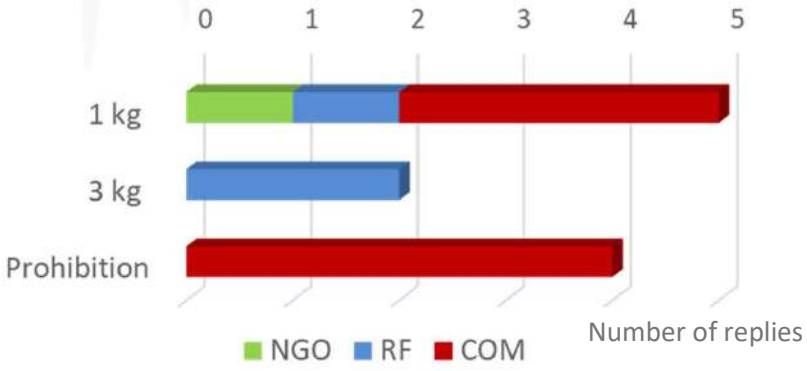
Sepia officinalis



Paracentrotus lividus

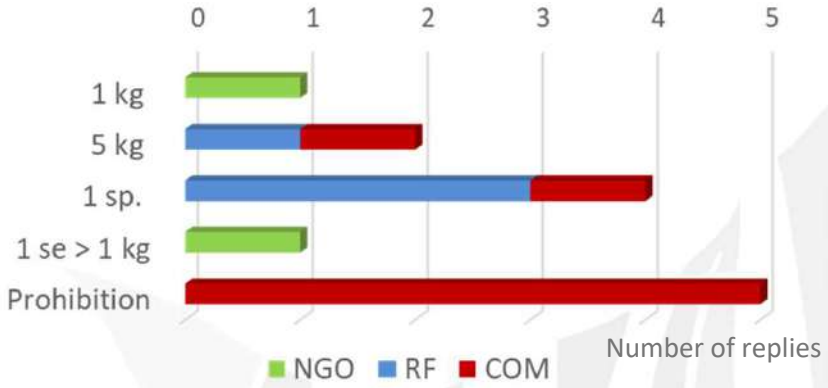


Donax trunculus

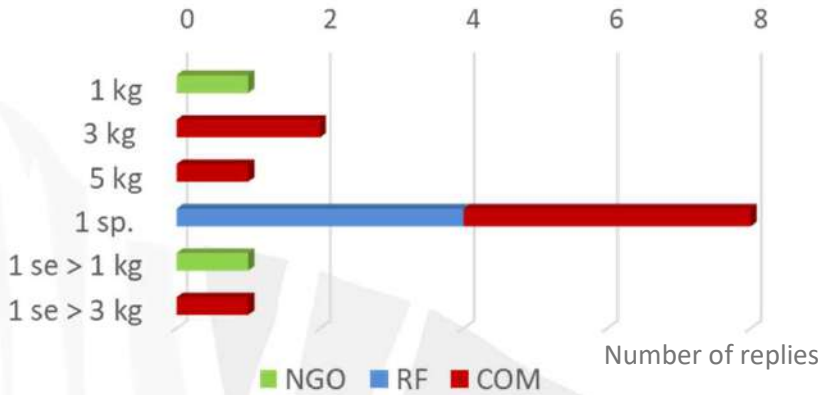


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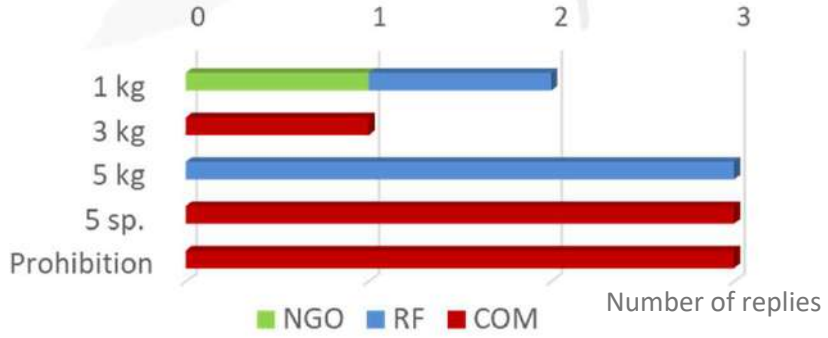
Galeorhinus galeus



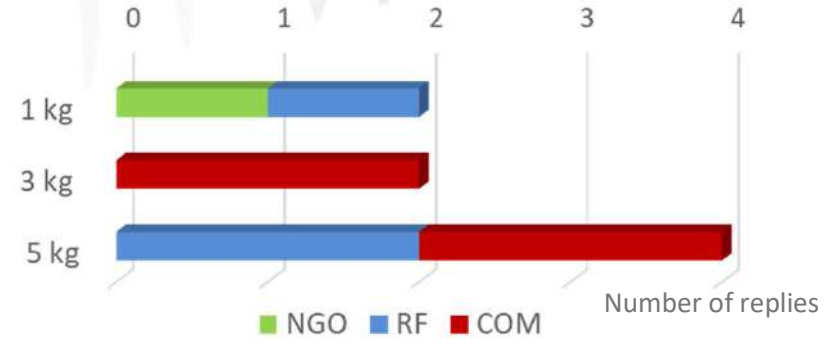
Lichia amia



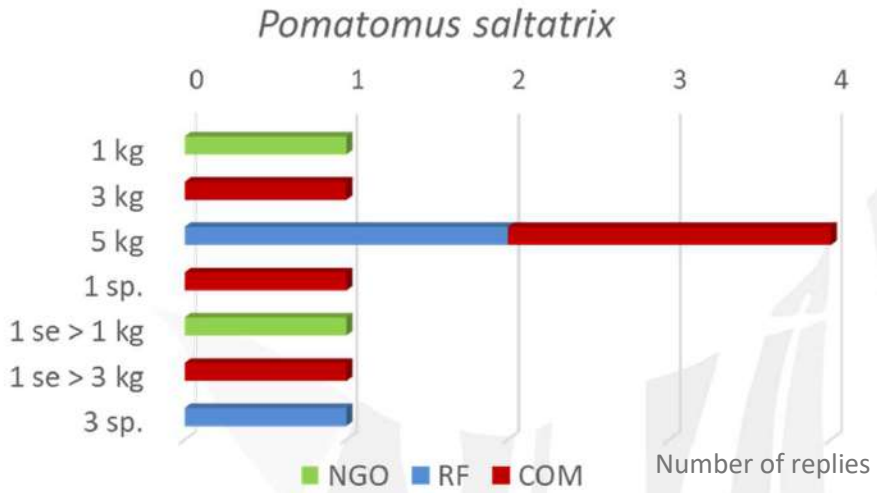
Loligo vulgaris

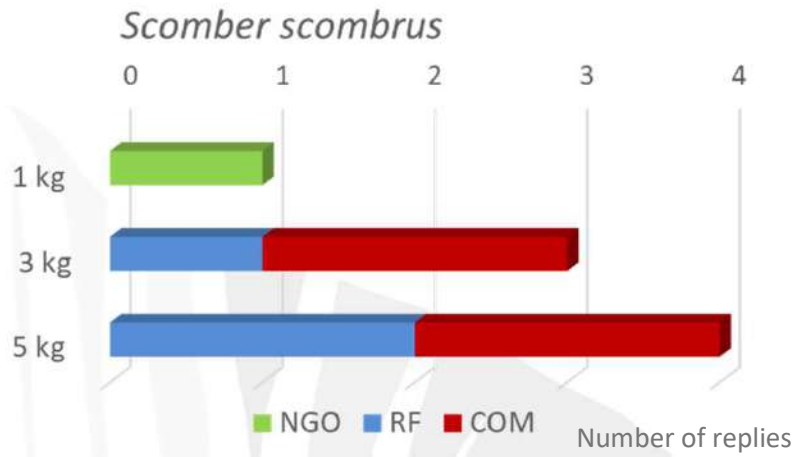


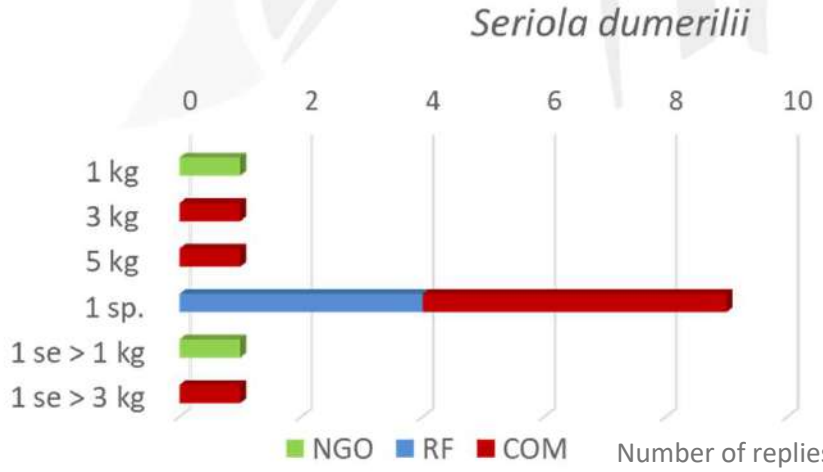
Merlangius merlangus

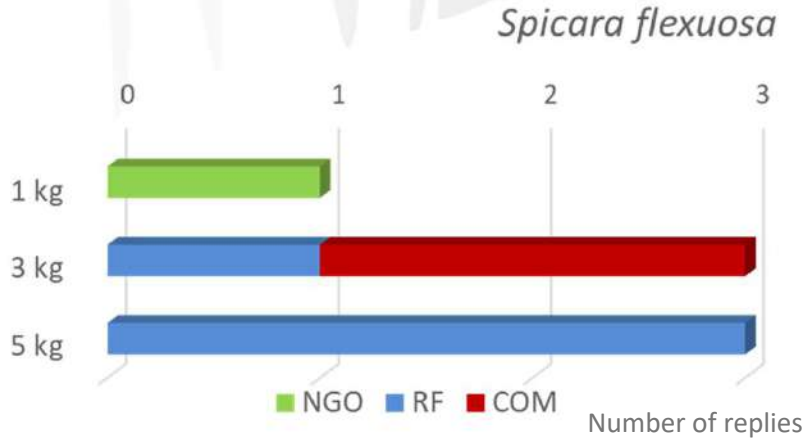


DAILY BAG

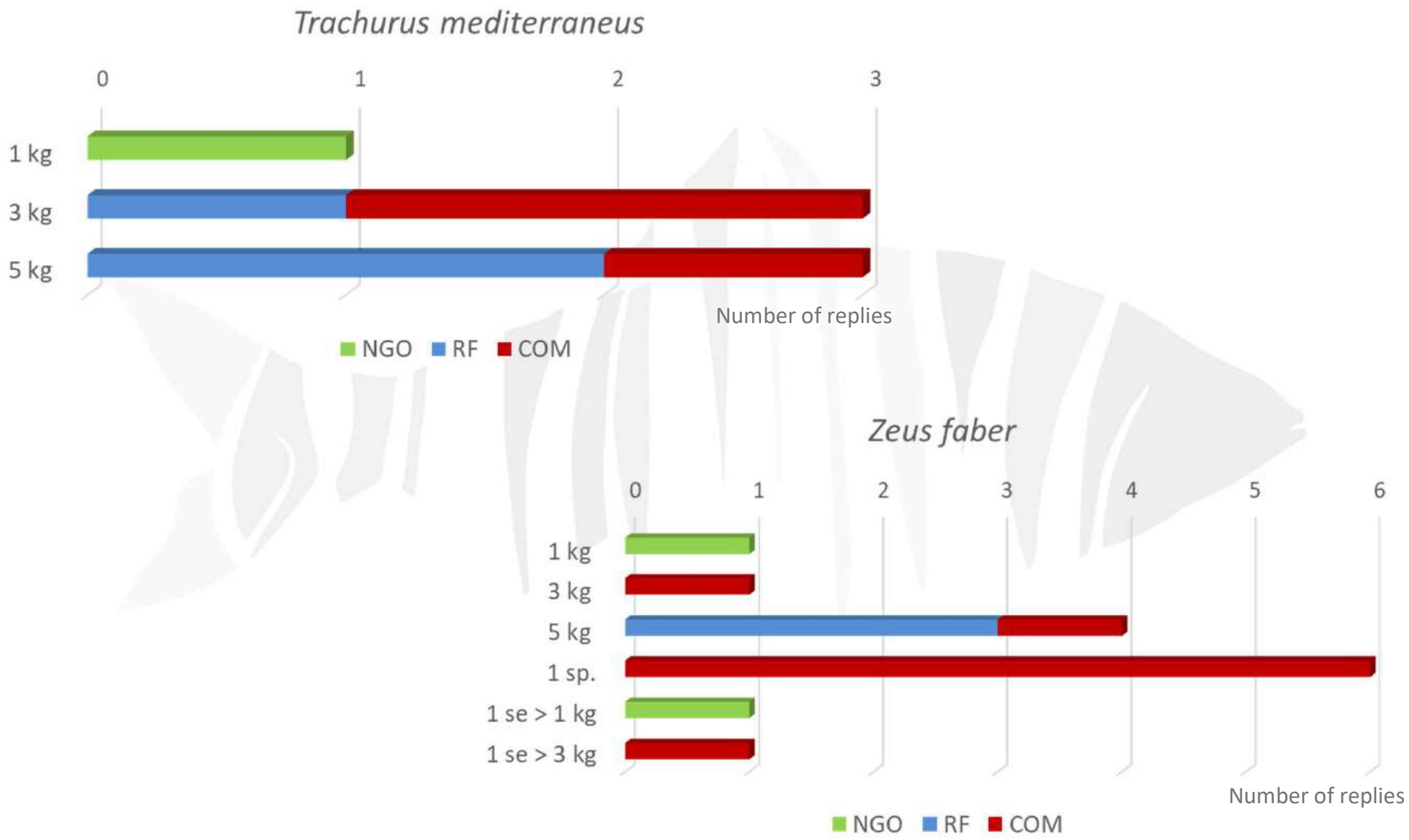

Pomatomus saltatrix
0
1
2
3
4
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
1 se > 1 kg
1 se > 3 kg
3 sp.
NGO
RF
COM
Number of replies


Scomber scombrus
0
1
2
3
4
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
NGO
RF
COM
Number of replies


Seriola dumerilii
0
2
4
6
8
10
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
1 se > 1 kg
1 se > 3 kg
NGO
RF
COM
Number of replies


Spicara flexuosa
0
1
2
3
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
NGO
RF
COM
Number of replies

DAILY BAG


Trachurus mediterraneus
0
1
2
3
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
Number of replies
NGO
RF
COM
Zeus faber
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
1 kg
3 kg
5 kg
1 sp.
1 se > 1 kg
1 se > 3 kg
Number of replies
NGO
RF
COM