



CONCLUSIONS

Data now available to the scientific community prove, without doubt, the large-scale influence of fishing on the ecosystem. Unless public opinion (or fishermen) request intervention, at least in the most evident cases, while observing national and international reality, it is possible to foresee that governmental organisations would hardly be effective. The scanty results on this matter may represent an excuse to postpone consideration of the problem (see Kaiser, 2000).

In spite of several proposals, particularly those made by Dutch and Scottish researchers, aimed at modifying trawl gears in order to limit their impact, most scientists are convinced that only through significant reduction of fishing can the conditions of biocenoses living on our sea bottoms improve in the short term.

The ever-to-be-recalled precautionary principle means that clearer definitions and better defined operating procedures must be applied to both exploited stocks and the remaining part of the ecosystem.

Unfortunately, in the latter case, the problem becomes more complicated, since we still do not know the functions of its components sufficiently well, as they are often considered as less important than commercial ones and are therefore less well studied from the quantitative viewpoint.

The main significant points are the physical and biological parameters of fishing, not only catches and landing quotas.

After examining the few cases related to applying the ecosystem approach at an international level (especially in Northern Europe), there is growing evidence that there are better opportunities of success in a milieu of regionalised (as opposed to centralised) management, and these opportunities are enhanced in territorial waters where the application and enforcement of forms of local-type management are possible. The case of establishing local geographic compartments in clam fishing management in the Adriatic may be a point of reference, not only for Italy.

In any case, it is fundamental for public opinion to realise the essential importance of fisheries for the quality of marine environments, such as the sea-bottom, which is not directly visible either to ordinary people or to those really motivated from a general environmental viewpoint. Above all, the management of fishing activities must be included in plans aimed at allowing the marine ecosystem to function in proper conditions. It must not be forgotten that the latter point will also prove, in the long run, to be an advantage for fishermen, allowing them to maintain the best fishery traditions of our countries.

Finito di stampare
nel mese di Giugno 2000
presso la Litografia "LA PHOTOGRAPH" s.n.c. (PD)
per conto de "IL LEGGIO" Libreria Editrice
in Sottomarina - Chioggia (VE)