

Foreword



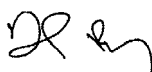
It is a great pleasure to write the Foreword of the first Report of the Laboratory of Ichthyology of the Department of Biology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. One reason, obviously, is Aristotle's very name, eminently suitable for a university, given the wide range of interests he displayed, which included ichthyology.

The Laboratory of Ichthyology (LoI) was established in 1990, and its activities have greatly expanded since, particularly in recent years. Since the mid 1990s, I have maintained close relationships with its members, especially Kostas Stergiou. These relationships were greatly strengthened in the last few years by the participation of LoI in the FishBase Consortium, in which the LoI plays a crucial role. Notably, the LoI has, for FishBase, turned the Mediterranean from the *Mare Incognitum* that it was to one of its best documented large marine ecosystems.

Another measure of scientific performance is provided by key numbers. Thus, during 1990-2007, the members of LoI published a total number of 687 items, of which 205 were articles in international journals. They also conducted 90 scientific projects, and organized 20 symposia, congresses and workshops, of which 7 were national and 13 international events. Also, the annual number of citations received by the members of the LoI increased from 40 citations per year in 2000 to an average of about 90 for 2002-2005, then surging to 160 citations per year in 2006 and 2007. Finally, members of the LoI participate in the editorial board of 8 international journals, some of which are key resources for aquatic sciences and fisheries (e.g. *Fisheries Research* and *Marine Ecology Progress Series*).

The members of the LoI publish in very respectable journals, such as *Journal of Fish Biology*, *Fisheries Research*, *Fishery Bulletin of US*, *Fish and Fisheries*, *ICES Journal of Marine Sciences*, *Marine Ecology Progress Series*, *Oceanography and Marine Biology - An Annual Review*, etc, and the 2006 impact factor of the journals in which they published during 1990-2007 ranged from 0.21 to 9.25, with a median of 1.22, higher than the median impact factor of all journals (n=41) of the category 'Fisheries' of the Web of Science.

Several of these papers have received a very respectable number of citations, thus proving that scientists who live in a language other than English can contribute to the international scientific conversation - which requires a common language - and be recognized for doing so. Indeed, the LoI has become a serious discussant in the conversation of Science, and should be congratulated for this.



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