



Port of San Benedetto del Tronto
Onboard of *Mediterranea*
May, 8th 2014

Press release n.3

Mediterranea Project: the British researchers of SAHFOS will be onboard to study the plankton. For nearly a third of the Mediterranean, this will be the first time. Mediterranea receives also the prestigious patronage of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mediterranea Project has received yesterday another important *endorsement*, **the patronage of Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, which adds to the support of the President of the Republic and to the many accolades already obtained by the Italian expedition for its cultural, social and scientific purposes.

Within a few days from the date scheduled for the departure (May 17th, from the port of San Benedetto del Tronto), "**Mediterranea Project**" proceeds with the organization, especially of the activities of marine science. The boat **will operate as a floating lab for science**, hosting onboard, among the others, the British researchers of **SAHFOS** (*The Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science*), organization that operates the **Continuous Plankton Recorder** (CPR) survey since 1931. All along the 5 years route in the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea and the northern Red Sea, research activities on **biodiversity** will be conducted onboard of *Mediterranea*. Over a third of this wide expanse of sea, especially in northern Africa, data will be collected for the first time in history.

"*Mediterranea*" collects, in fact, [the alarm of scientists](#) taking them onboard to study how the Mediterranean biodiversity is changing. The Mediterranean is one of the major reservoirs of marine and coastal biodiversity, with up to 18% of the world's macroscopic marine species, and yet under constant and growing human pressure which is significantly altering its characteristics.

The boat "**Mediterranea**" has been made available for researchers of SAHFOS to assess and compare biodiversity of marine plankton across the Mediterranean, Black Sea and northern Red Sea.

For the first time in history a sampling will be conducted in some regions of the Mediterranean basin where data on plankton are not yet available (e.g. North African coast) *costa del Nord Africa*) and data comparisons will be done in the areas where information on plankton are available on regional scale thanks to previous oceanographic expeditions (e.g. north- western Mediterranean).

SAHFOS operates the plankton monitoring with the *Continuous Plankton Recorder* (CPR) since 1931.

The plankton samples, collected at surface by towing in continuous a *small plankton indicator* behind the boat and, in some reference spots also on the water column using a small net, will be stored on board and periodically sent back to SAHFOS for the analysis of phyto and zooplankton, so that **the list of recorded species will be regularly updated** and made available to the scientific community, stakeholders and public opinion in a '**plankton bulletin**'.

At the end of the project **the main eco-regions and hot spots of marine plankton biodiversity in the Mediterranean and adjacent seas will be identified.**

Comparison of plankton communities and their environments in recent and past years, will contribute to **identify Mediterranean regions in which marine biodiversity is most at risk** due to climate change, intensive urbanization, overexploitation of resources, proliferation of introduced species (via marine transport or through the Suez Canal) and pollution caused by anthropogenic activities.

Plankton collected during the expedition will be included in SAHFOS reference collection of worldwide plankton (**Mediterranean Plankton Museum**).

To support this important scientific expedition, *Mediterranea Project* and *Sahfos* will start soon a **crowdfunding campaign** in order to sustain the research activities onboard.

www.progettomediterranea.com



Progetto Mediterranea
e-mail: info@progettomediterranea.com
www.progettomediterranea.com

Co-sponsor

Precision
FLUID CONTROLS

