

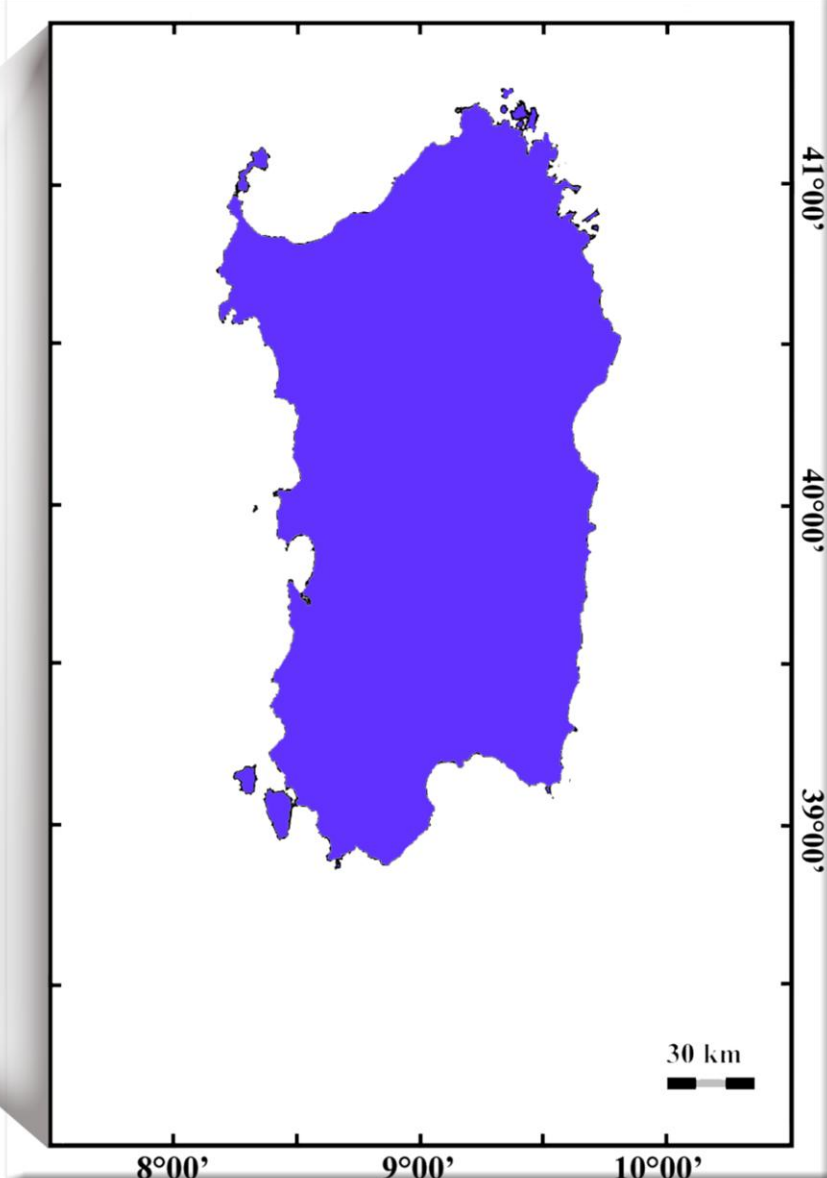
An experimental management of the octopus fishery in Sardinia

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In Sardinia, the octopus fishery by traps with bait (*Carcinus aestuarii*, Nardo 1847) is carried out by family business small boats (<12 m LOA) that operate in spring-summer within a depth of 50 metres with a very low by-catch (Cuccu *et al.*, 1999). Even if Sardinia is the largest Italian producer of octopuses (in 2011: 1672 t and € 9,3 m) (Irepa, 2012), statistics show continuous temporal fluctuations of the *octopus* landed, particularly in the last decade. Its production has gone from 3400 t in 2001 to 1586 t in 2010 reflecting the worldwide decline (FAO, 2006, 2013).



Limiting the number of traps

Decree n° 22 of 17/07/2002

Gross tonnage	Number of traps for fisherman	Maximum number of traps for boat
< 2 GT	400	400
2 ≤ GT ≤ 5	300	800
> 5 GT	300	1200

Despite the lack of Italian measures to regulate the fishery of *O. vulgaris*, the Autonomous Region of Sardinia has put in place some regulations of which some are still in force (**)...

Fixing the minimum landing size of 300 g

Decree n° 22 of 17/07/2002



Protecting the recruitment by fishing bans with differences in the timetable according to the different maritime districts

Decrees n° A/68 2067 of 29/08/2008 and n° A/87 2067 of 08/09/2009

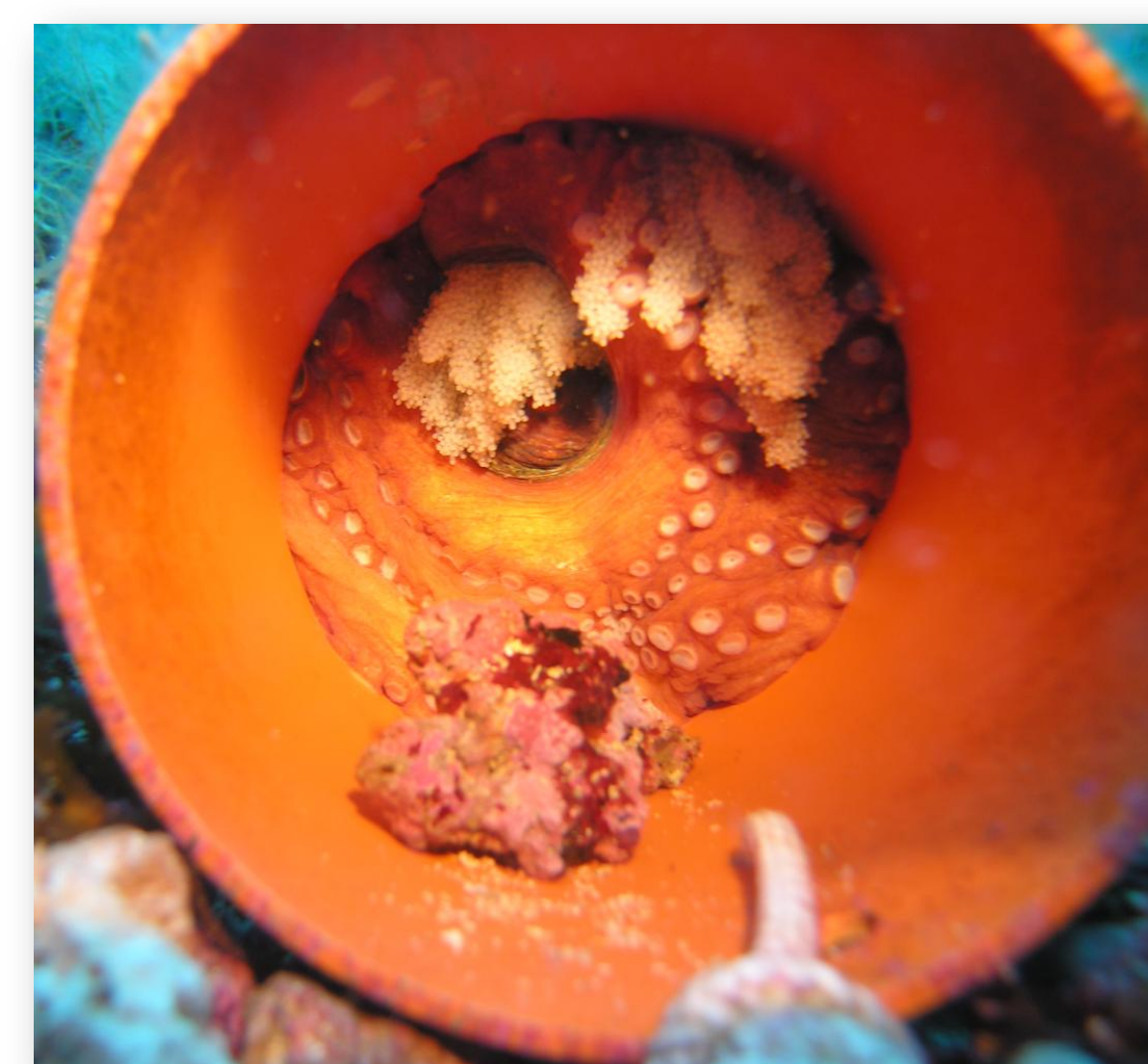


... and

an experimental management carried out by researchers and fishermen in an area of central western Sardinia based on:

- ✓ monitoring of commercial octopus fishery by traps;
- ✓ temporary fishing ban of an area;
- ✓ experimental fishing, tagging and releasing of small specimens in the area;
- ✓ monitoring of artificial dens laid on the ground of the area

- Coastal Area Management Programme - CAMP Italy



If there is the intention to plan the octopus fishery regulations in the Mediterranean Sea, it could be useful to consider some results from the experimental management in Sardinia:

- ✓ Temporal skidding of the recruitment among the years occur frequently

showing the need of flexible regulations to be determined on the base of an annual monitoring at local level

- ✓ Tagged young specimens are been recaptured inside the area of release and near it

this is in agreement with the validity of a regulation on the minimum commercial size but considering also the different sizes at maturity in the two genders (Cuccu *et al.*, 2013).

- ✓ Females spawn inside the artificial dens

confirming the effectiveness to create spawning area increasing the natural shelters.

In the belief that the octopus fishery management should be addressed taking into account also the socio-economic aspects it would be appropriate to work in close cooperation with the fishermen