



**Workshop on Regional Management Plan for  
red coral  
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# **The opportunity of using the ROV for better management of *Corallium rubrum* and for the safety of workers**

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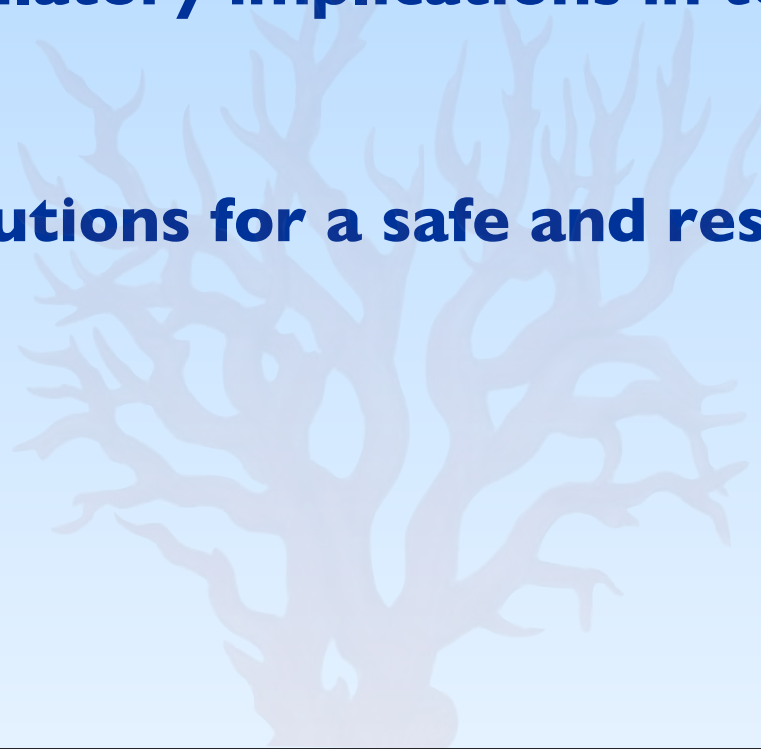
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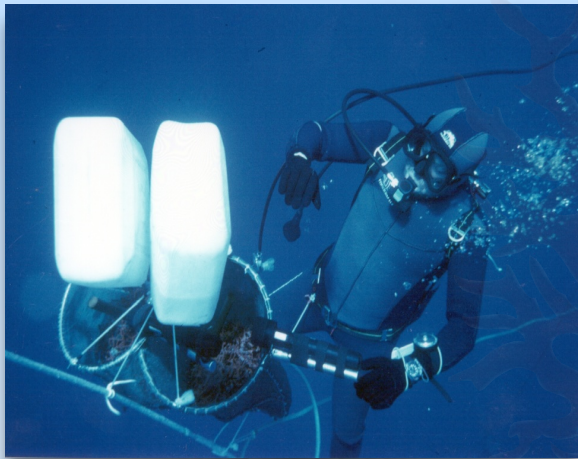
**Practical solutions for a safe and responsible fishing**



# Evolution of the practice of red coral fishing



**In the early '60s the professional underwater fishing of red coral began, initially at depth ranging from 30 m to 70 m.**



**In Sardinia (the Region where most all of the Italian coral is harvested), the Italian bar (ingegno) and St. Andrew's Cross have been banned since 1989.**

**Only manual harvesting is allowed by professional fishermen with ax and net, equipped with underwater apparatus, autonomous or not.**

**They perform free divers between 100 m and 140 m depth!**

# **Implication of this kind of fishing**

- **No contact with the vessel**
- **No possibility of recovery in case of accident/illness**
- **No specific professional title**
- **No professional qualification by the crew**
- **Decompression chambers not approved**



# Gaps of this kind of fishing (I)

During this decade of activity , tens of fishermen have died in the Mediterranean. Some others were saved by a miracle, often at the cost of serious injuries.

The new European Safety Rules impose to all professional workers and thus also to the professional divers operating over 50 m depth:

- hyperbaric plants in closed bell
- cables and umbilical cords
- a constant audio - visual monitoring
- medical assistance
- adequate naval support.

- *89/391/CEE Directive of June 12, 1989;*
- *article 153 on the Functioning of the European Union with in particular the "principle of prevention and risk assessment at work".*
- *UNI 11366.*



## Gaps of this kind of fishing (2)

**The coral harvesting is to be considered, without any doubt, a diving professional activity, and as such it needs to ensure compliance with all Safety Regulations, to which all workers should have with equal rights.**

**Due to the elevated costs, these international Safety Rules are applied on industrial scale, but not on artisan scale.**



# **Practical solutions for a safe and responsible fishing (I)**

**Transversal Workshop on red coral Alghero (Sardinia),  
Italy,  
16-17 September 2010**

**Among General Conclusions and Recommendations.....**

***As a precautionary approach, to carry out regional pilot studies to assess the potential biological, ecological, economical and environmental impact regarding the use of new technologies to harvest red coral, namely among others, ROV.***

**This recommendation was reiterated in in the GFCM 35/2011/2.**



# **Practical solutions for a safe and responsible fishing (2)**

**Report of the Transversal Workshop on red coral  
Ajaccio (Corsica), France, 5-7 October 2011**

## **PROPOSAL OF A PILOT STUDY ON ROV IMPACT**

***To assess the impact of the ROV, a series of pilot studies (as already recommended by the Workshop of 2010) should be developed in different sites and areas of the Mediterranean.***

**A protocol has been presented by University of Sassari to Autonomous Regional Sardinia Government in July 2011, in collaboration with us, willing to finance it, and the answer is still pending.**

**The proposal was included in the Ajaccio GFCM Report for its consideration by other Institutions of the GFCM.**



# Concluding remarks

It's our opinion that some people continue to confuse some ROV, that are little more than toys, with others equipped with everything you need to make a conservative fishery virtually harmless to the coral populations and to environment.

Other, very rooted erroneous beliefs are:

***“If you use the ROV there are no more restrictions on fishing”***  
***“SCUBA harvesting inflicts little direct damage to non-target species in the same *habitat*”.***

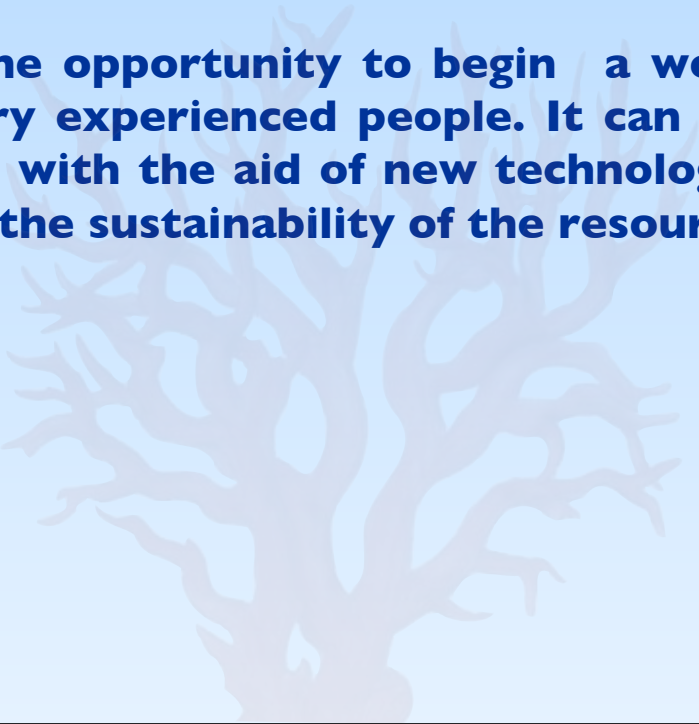
We refer to ROV that:

- 1) has a weight not less than 80 kg
- 2) are equipped with a stabilization system that leave them absolutely still near the rock to ensure a correct position of the gear during coral harvest operation and with visual equipment appropriate for the operations.
- 3) can catch coral branches only one by one
- 4) can't fish into small caves, crevices or holes.

# Conclusions

**Only by an appropriate selective collection, focused exclusively to the larger ramifications and monitoring those areas with young colonies one can guarantee a truly sustainable fisheries with respect for the environment for the red coral itself : This approach can only be guaranteed by ROV.**

**We also can't miss the opportunity to begin a work that is extremely technical done by very experienced people. It can be further developed and greatly improved with the aid of new technologies, in full respect of the environment and the sustainability of the resource.**



The background features a large, light blue, stylized illustration of a coral tree. In the upper right corner, there are two small, tilted rectangular images. The top image shows a vibrant red coral structure against a blue background. The bottom image shows a more complex, branching coral structure in shades of blue and white.

# Thank you!

***A Document concerning these topics is made at disposal to the participants***