

Editorial

## Coastal Fish Research

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Coastal fish are key components of marine ecosystems, influencing, directly or indirectly, marine life worldwide. Furthermore, among coastal fish, there are many species that represent target species for many fisheries (commercial and recreational) and contribute considerably to the economy of several coastal countries. Despite this, the biology and ecology of several species still remain little known or unknown, with several species waiting to be described. Furthermore, many fish stocks are being overexploited and in urgent need of sustainable management. Another interesting side of coastal fish is their importance as bioindicators of the status of the aquatic ecosystems. Indeed, often, coastal fish are directly exposed (and sometimes seriously threatened) to a variety of human impacts (e.g., pollution, habitat destruction, overfishing) [1]. On the other hand, invasive alien coastal fish represent in many areas a serious threat to marine biodiversity and in some cases to economy and human health.

It thus appears clear that understanding and deepening knowledge around biology and ecology of coastal fish is one of the main challenges for marine biologists and ecologists. For example, in an era in which invasive alien species threaten marine biodiversity, but can also have economic and human health impacts, the understanding of the dynamics and processes underlying biological invasions is of fundamental importance for effective management and conservation of biodiversity and ecological integrity [2]. Furthermore, the increasing marine pollution represents a serious threat to coastal fish and to marine life in general, although this phenomenon encompasses a great variety of aspects and effects on marine fish are often difficult to detect and quantify. However, some types of laboratory analysis on coastal fish fauna can give good indications of the general status of the marine environment and of the effects that specific pollutants can have on fish populations.

This special edition is intended to be a contribution to the knowledge of several aspects of fish biology and ecology: coastal fish diversity, coastal fisheries and commercial species, biological invasions process and non-indigenous species, interactions between fish and their environment, ethology, bioaccumulation and reproduction [1–12]. I hope this special issue will be helpful for all marine biologists involved in studies on fish biology and ecology.

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