

Marine biology, biodiversity and conservation: foreword to the SIEBM 2010 Conference

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Sánchez Lizaso, J. L., Bayle Sempere, J. & Sánchez Jerez, P., 2011. Marine biology, biodiversity and conservation: foreword to the SIEBM 2010 Conference. *Animal Biodiversity and Conservation*, 34.1: 71.

The SIEBM (Iberian Symposium of Studies on Marine Biology) has a long tradition. The conference was first convened in 1979 and it has since been held approximately biannually. It was originally focused on marine benthos, but two editions ago it was decided to widen its objectives to include other related subjects. The 15th edition was held at the University of Alicante from 6th to 10th September 2010.

One of the strong points of SIEBM is that it provides the opportunity for interaction between well-known researchers and young marine scientists, mainly from Spain and Portugal. In the 2010 edition, however, it was attended by 268 participants from 15 countries.

SIEBM 2010 focused on the human impact on marine ecosystems and the conservation of marine biodiversity to coincide with the United Nations declaring 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity. From a total number of 330 communications received, the Scientific Committee selected 70 for oral presentations and the rest were presented as posters. Each day a plenary conference covered what we considered as the fastest growing areas in marine biology: landscape ecology. The impact of global warming on marine ecosystems, approaches to fisheries management and the study and conservation of deep ecosystems.

The oral presentations were divided into 15 sessions that included both basic research on biodiversity, phylogeny or marine ecology, and applied research in management, fisheries, conservation and the human impact on marine ecosystems. Abstracts, posters and presentations are available at <http://www.siebm.org>.

The studies included in this volume show the variety of subjects and approaches addressed during the conference. These papers were selected and edited by a group of referees and we wish to thank them for their efforts and conscientious work. A list of their names is included. Of the 28 studies received, 13 were finally accepted for this volume.

We also would like to thank all the people who helped in one way or another to make the 15th SIEBM Conference and the proceedings such a success. We thank the Scientific Committee for revising the abstracts and selecting the oral presentations. Most members of this committee also chaired sessions and undertook this task with commitment and dedication.

The planning, logistics and running of the conference were made possible thanks to the enthusiasm of the organising committee and a group of student helpers. We are profoundly indebted to Carlos Valle and Aitor Forcada for their invaluable contribution to the organisation.

Finally, we thank all the sponsors who contributed to the meeting, and especially the Fundación Biodiversidad and the Natural History Museum of Barcelona for their support in publishing this special issue of *Animal Biodiversity and Conservation*.

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