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GENETIC BARCODING OF ELASMOBRANCHES IN MALTA (CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN)

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Abstract

The correct identification of species constitutes the first step in accurate fisheries data collection and sustainable management. DNA barcoding of a standardized sequence of the COI gene has proven to be a powerful tool in assisting conventional taxonomic methods in species identification, especially when considering species from taxa that are difficult to identify down to the species level. This paper presents work on a total of 77 elasmobranch specimens collected during commercial fishing activities between 2012 and 2013 within the 25 nautical mile Fisheries Management Zone around the Maltese Islands.