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Surveying the deep marine resources of Macaronesia – The PESCPROF Project (2003-2007)

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The archipelagos of Azores, Madeira and Canaries are included in the biogeographic region of Macaronesia, located in the Northeast and Eastern-Central Atlantic. These three oceanic archipelagos share some geomorphologic and oceanographic affinities, namely the narrow insular shelf, steep incline of the slope and the oligotrophic character of the waters, which strongly influence their marine biodiversity and exploitation of fisheries resources. The need to increase knowledge about the deep-sea resources in these archipelagos has started recently, and the PESCPROF Project is giving a major contribution for it. This project has been developed in three distinct phases: 1) Deep-water Fishing Resources of the Eastern-Central Atlantic (PESCPROF-1), 2003-2006; 2) Deep-water Fishing Resources of the Eastern-Central Atlantic: Fishing Alternatives in the Macaronesia (PESCPROF-2), 2004-2006; 3) Deep-water Fishing Resources of the Eastern-Central Atlantic: Evaluation of their Exploitation Potential and Diffusion of Results (PESCPROF-3), 2005-2007. In this poster, the specific scientific goals of each of the phases of the PESCPROF Project are presented in detail, along with the strategies adopted to achieve the overall purpose of developing a comprehensive knowledge of the marine biodiversity and the potential exploitation of the deep-sea resources (between 250-2500 m deep) in this area of the Atlantic. The poster also includes the description of the surveys already accomplished in the three archipelagos and of the fishing gear and methods used and points out, in some cases, the use of innovative techniques as a result of an active process of cooperation in the

transference of scientific knowledge and fishing technology and methods among the Macaronesian regions involved in this project. This research was co-funded by the EU FEDER, INTERREG III-B projects, ref. MAC/4.2/M12, 03/MAC/4.2/M8 and 05/MAC4.2/M11.

Surveying the deep marine resources of Macaronesia – Sharks, rays and rabbit fishes

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In the framework of the PESCPROF projects, field work in the waters of Azores, Madeira and Canary islands was done in order to search for new species of potential commercial interest between 250 and 2500 m, using bottom fish traps and longlines (both bottom and mid-water). Preliminary results of this research are given including a list of the sharks, rays and rabbit fishes collected by depth strata (mean depths at 250, 500, 750, 1000, 1500, 2000 and 2500 m). At least 25 species belonging to 11 families were identified in the three archipelagoes. The families Centrophoridae and Somniosidae (Squaliformes) were the most diverse, with 50% of the species caught. Among them, *Deania hystricosa* (Garman, 1906) (Centrophoridae) around 1000 m depth and *Centroscymnus coelolepis* Bocage & Capello, 1864 (Sommiosidae) around 1500 m depth were the most abundant and could be potential resources in the near future. *Centroscyllium fabricii* (Reinhardt, 1825) (Etmopteridae) was recorded for the first time from the Azores. This research was co-funded by the EU FEDER, INTERREG III-B projects, ref. MAC/4.2/M12, 03/MAC/4.2/M8 and 05/MAC4.2/M11.