

The 6th FishBase Consortium meeting and 3rd Mini FishBase Symposium

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The 6th annual FishBase Consortium (FBC) meeting was held in Thessaloniki (Northern Greece) from August 31 to September 2, 2005, in one of the most beautiful buildings of the historical centre of the city, belonging to The Society of Macedonian Studies. The meeting was supported by the Laboratory of Ichthyology (School of Biology, Aristotle University), chaired by Nicolas Bailly, and attended by the following representatives of the Consortium:

1) Rainer Froese (Leibniz-Institut für Meereswissenschaften, IfM-GEOMAR, Kiel, Germany)

2) Daniel Pauly, Maria-Lourdes Palomares and Vasiliki Karpouzi (Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia, Canada)

3) Frederic Busson and Patrice Pruvost (Museum National d' Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France)

4) Sven Kullander and Anders Silfvergrip (Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm, Sweden)

5) Jordi Leonart (FAO, Rome, Italy)

6) Jos Snoeks, Gert Boden and Tobias Musschoot (Musée Royal de l' Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium)

7) Niel Andew, Nicolas Bailly and Emily Capuli (World Fish Center, Philippines)

8) Konstantinos I. Stergiou, Dimitra Bobori, Efi Antonopoulou, Athanasios Tsikliras and Paraskevi Karachle (School of Biology, Aristotle University).

Dr Cornelia Nauen (European Commission, Brussels), Dr Ningsheng Yang (Information Center of the Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences) and Dr Zhixin Chen (Ministry of Agri-



culture of People's Republic of China) also attended the meeting as observers.

During the three-day meeting the participants: (i) presented their annual progress reports; (ii) discussed the working plan of the next year (2005-2006); (iii) discussed the 'errors' occurring in FishBase and how they could be handled; (iv) considered the potential expansion of FBC with new members; and (v) discussed the future expansion of FishBase by including organisms other than fish. Overall, the FBC was happy with the progress in 2005 and the public usage of FishBase, which reached 20 million hits per month in September 2005.

The meeting ended with the election of Dr Maria-Lourdes 'Deng' Palomares as vice-chair for the year 2005-2006, and thus she will become chair of the FBC in the year 2006-2007 (replacing Kostas Stergiou). The FBC decided that the 7th FBC meeting (and

the 4th FishBase Mini Symposium) will take place in the Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, in early September 2006.

During the 6th FBC meeting, the 3rd FishBase Mini Symposium with theme 'Fish and More' took place in the Central Library of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, on August 31st. Overall, 12 contributions were presented in the symposium covering a wide range of topics such as: FishBase as an ecological tool; life history of fishes; potential changes in FishBase structure and content from 'just fish to more than fish'; aspects of the life history of Mediterranean freshwater and marine fishes; uncovering information, often hidden in drawers, grey literature or local databases; the use of FishBase for storing maximum lengths and length-frequencies of fish species reconstructed from written, pictorial, and archaeological sources [e.g., reconstruction of the length-frequency distribution of the 12 common dolphinfish, *Coryphaena hippurus*, held by the little fisherman from Thera (see picture above left), either based on Economidis'¹ assumption that the boy's height is 120 cm, or on Froese's impression that 'the boy looks 160 cm to me'; see Stergiou²]; and the policy processes influencing the discussions about the 7th Research Framework Programme of the European Union, which can also be considered as a potential venue for funding.

The proceedings of the symposium are available in PDF format from the FishBase web-page (www.fishbase.org/media.cfm).

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Daniel Pauly receives Honorary Doctorate from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

by Konstantinos I. Stergiou and Dimitra C. Bobori

We are pleased to announce that Daniel Pauly was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the School of Biology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The ceremony took place on November 22, 2005 in one of the oldest buildings of the Aristotle University, which hosts the School of Philosophy.

Daniel received this award as recognition for his Sisyphean and pioneering integrated scientific achievements in the field of Fisheries Biology, especially for the development of tools (i.e., Elefan, Ecopath, FishBase), concepts (i.e., notably fishing down marine food webs, shifting the baseline; ah, yes, there is also allogenous self-plagiarism), and projects (i.e., *Sea Around Us*) which are all used, in a synergetic fashion, for the understanding of the effects of fishing on fisheries resources and on marine ecosystems in general.

Daniel attended the ceremony with his wife Sandra. The first author (KIS) presented Daniel's colourful profile - as a person, scientist, and friend. Consequently, Daniel wore a gown (*tivennos* in Greek) for the first time in

his life (!) and received the diploma and medals from the Director of the School of Biology, Zacharias Skouras, and the vice Rector of the university, Aikaterini Douka – Kampitoglou. Finally, Daniel, in order to 'justify why I got this', gave a lecture on "Global Trends in Marine Fisheries".

Daniel and Sandra stayed in Thessaloniki for a week. Daniel was unprepared for the harsh weather. Yes, weather in Thessaloniki can be at times nasty, cold and rainy, especially during the winter time when the Vardaris wind blows. Despite the nasty weather, we hope that both of them enjoyed their stay. Although they did not have the opportunity to witness a plate-breaking event, they did taste a variety of Greek foods, and visit the Royal Tombs of Phillip II and Alexander IV, the son of Alexander the Great, at Vergina. During his stay Daniel, being what he is, also found time to submit, revise and finally get accepted a paper (co-authored with KIS) on the equivalence of results

from Thomson ISI's Citation Index and Google's Scholar service (see www.int-res.com/articles/ese/2005/E65.pdf).



Above: Daniel Pauly receives his Diploma and medal from the vice Rector of the university, Aikaterini Douka-Kampitoglou (right), and the Director of the School of Biology, Zacharias Skouras (left). Below: Daniel Pauly with some of his 'new colleagues'.
Photos by I. Tsouflidis

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References

1. Economidis, P.S. 2000. The 'little fisherman' and the fish he holds. In: Sherratt S (ed) The wall paintings of Thera. Proceedings of the 1st International Symposium, Nomikos PM Conference Center, 30 August – 4 September 1997, Athens, Volume II: 555-562
2. Stergiou, K.I. 2005. FishBase Symposium: Fish and More. In: Stergiou KI & DC Bobori (eds.) FishBase Symposium: Fish and More. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University Studio Press, Thessaloniki, Greece, p. 1-4.



The participants of the 6th annual FishBase Consortium meeting, 2 September 2005, Thessaloniki. From left to right 1st row: Emily Capuli, Vasiliki Karpouzi, Nicolas Bailly, Kostas Stergiou, Tobias Musschoot, Maria-Lourdes Palomares, Patrice Pruvost, Frederic Busson, 2nd row: Efi Antonopoulou, Paraskevi Karachle, Dimitra Bobori, Athanassios Tsikliras, Jordi Leonart, Gert Boden, Niel Andew, Sven Kullander, 3rd row: Anders Silfvergrip, Jos Snoeks, Daniel Pauly, Rainer Froese.
Photo by Frederic Busson.

