**Introduction**

**Holothuroidea:**
- Class Echinodermata.
- Detritivorous feeding behavior.
- Process large amounts of sediment → High level impact of physical bioturbation and biochemistry reworking (Hudson et al., 2004)

**Problems:**
- Globally, holothurids are a fishery target taxa with high commercial value. However, in this area, they are not currently a commercial targeted group.
- By catch and potential threats on habitats.
- Scarce studies in Bay of Biscay (e.g. Serrano et al., 2006).

**Data to study:**
- Data from 1993 to 2011 collected by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO) along the coasts of the southern Bay of Biscay through the annual bottom trawl survey “Demersales”.

**Methods**

The study has been developed considering (1) different depth (m) intervals (<70, 70-120, 121-200, 201-500, >500) and (2) geographical regions (MF: Miño-Fisterra; FE: Fisterrá-Estaca; EP: Estaca-Perñas; PA: Perñas-Ajo; AB: Ajo-Bidasoa) (Fig. 1, 2 & 3).

**Results**

Holothurid catch data is displayed in the table 1. The most abundant orders during the studied period were Aspidochirotida and Elasipodida. Only 3 species, *P. regalis*, *P. tremulus* and *Laetmogone violacea*, appeared in more than a 1% of the hauls.

**Distribution of sea cucumbers in the circalittoral soft-bottoms of the southern Bay of Biscay**

![Diagram](image)

**Remarks**

*Parastichopus regalis* appeared in depths above 200 m, being replaced in deeper levels by *Parastichopus tremulus*.

*Parastichopus regalis* was significantly more abundant in the eastern Bay of Biscay than in the western part where *Parastichopus tremulus* was the predominant species.

*Parastichopus tremulus* appeared in coarser sediments and in muddy bottoms. The occurrence of this species in muddy bottoms could be also related to depth.

*Laetmogone violacea* occurred mainly in deeper locations in muddy sediments.

Larger and more precise sampling should be performed to obtain more reliable results.

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**References**


