

CIESM Congress Session : Transitional waters
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Moderator's Synthesis

The main points raised in the general discussion were as follows:

1. We need a clear definition of transitional waters. Does it include all waterbodies near the shore line or is it restricted to influx of waters of lower salinity?
2. We need a clear classification of the different types of transitional waters occurring in the Mediterranean realm.
3. What are the characteristic features of Mediterranean transitional waters? A discussant remarked that nutrient turnover and removal in Mediterranean estuaries is less efficient than in other seas.
4. There are no common protocols and strategies for monitoring and investigating transitional waters. Transitional waters need a much higher monitoring and sampling resolution than the open ocean as they are more dynamic with regard to tides, terrestrial seasonal events, and anthropogenic activities. Protocols and strategies should be individually adapted to each type of transitional waters.

We agreed that transitional waters are suffering the highest anthropogenic pressure of marine waters. The upcoming threat by climate change (mainly sea level rise, warming, and decrease of precipitation) seems enormous but poorly investigated/ considered in the Mediterranean.

