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Poster

**Feeding habits of blackmouth catshark, *Galeus melastomus*, in the eastern Mediterranean**

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the feeding habits of *Galeus melastomus* and estimate its TROPH index in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. A total of 250 specimens were collected from three different fishing areas in the Greek waters and their stomach content was recorded considering the major prey groups. Diets were studied taking into account sex, body size, fishing area and season. The gender of each specimen was recorded (140 females, 110 males) with total lengths ranging from 155 to 570 mm and the length – weight relation was calculated. Osteichthyes were found as the most important prey (42.3% in terms of IRI,  $Q = 971$ ) with crustacean - natantia and cephalopods following as secondary prey. There were significant differences of prey selection and prey size among the studied groups although no differences were found between the diets of males and females. The body size was found to be the most important factor concerning prey selection. The small specimens consumed mainly osteichthyes while the larger ones preferred cephalopods and crustaceans. Moreover, it was estimated that this species can consume prey lengthen 46 % of its own length and weighted 39 % of its own weight. TROPH index was  $3.39 \pm 0.57$  while breadth (B) and omnitority (OI) indexes were also considered.

Keywords : Blackmouth catshark, Feeding, Trophic level