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Post-escape movements and habitat use of farmed sea bream *Sparus aurata* in the eastern Adriatic Sea

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One of the main negative effects associated with cage aquaculture is the accidental escape of domesticated individuals from farms due to technical and operational failures, net holes or similar. Among others, farmed escapees can affect wild populations through competition for food, transfer of pathogens and interbreeding with wild fish. Development of recapture strategy is advisable although post-escape behaviorism, dispersal potential and farmed fish survival in wild has only been sporadically investigated in the central Mediterranean. Thus, in the present study we simulated escape incidents of seabream tagged with acoustic transmitters (N = 25) at one farm located in the eastern Adriatic Sea, and monitored fish movements (4 months) using passive acoustic telemetry. Most of the tagged individuals (80%) were close to full time residents in the monitored area within the first 3 weeks after release. Later, fish dispersion occurred accompanied by high capture rate by local fishermen (30%) within the array of 15 acoustic receivers. Still, few individuals remained at the release farm throughout the study period. The results shown here can be helpful in development of methodologies and strategies to recapture escapees.

Biography

Tanja Šegvić-Bubić has completed her PhD at the age of 32 (University of Split, Croatia). As a research associate, her activities are focused on the aquaculture and environment interactions studies. She has published more than 24 papers in reputed journals and has investigated several international and national projects related with aquaculture impact on wild marine populations.

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