{rokbox title=|Theme Section highlights recent advances in the study of the early life history of fish :: Image: Authors|
thumb=|images/stories/ieo/imagenespublicaciones/centro-oceanografico-baleares-ieo-research-on-early-life-stages-of-fish-a-lively-field-catala-et-al-2020-thumb.jpg|}images/stories/ieo/imagenespublicaciones/centro-oceanografico-baleares-ieo-research-on-early-life-stages-of-fish-a-lively-field-catala-et-al-2020.jpg{/rokbox}

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Abstract: The first weeks in life are crucial for the fate of fish. During this period, fish show large dispersal rates and suffer from massive mortality due mainly to predation. Intrinsic and extrinsic processes (growth rates, advection, behavior, diseases) affect this mortality and have profound consequences on populations. For a century now, describing the distribution, physiology and dynamics of fish early life phases has been the focus of intense research, building a solid community of scientists that met at the 43rd Annual Larval Fish Conference, held in Palma, Spain, 21-24 May 2019. The present Theme Section consists of 19 papers that are a sample of the research presented at the conference. The papers are organized around 5 main topics: (1) mortality estimation and process understanding, (2) parental effects on larval fish ecology, (3) larval settlement to juvenile grounds, (4) early life stages of fish within food webs, and (5) contribution of early life stages of fish to assessment and management. Contributions to this Theme Section focus on hot topics as well as old paradigms; the latter continue to elicit much research work, which has benefited from recent advances in technology.

Keywords: Growth, Ichthyoplankton, Settlement, Mortality, Parental effects, Physiology, Predator-prey interactions, Recruitment, Simulation modelling