

# ANNALES

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*Annali di Studi istriani e mediterraneei*  
*Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies*  
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IN MEMORY OF FRANCESCO MARIA TAMBERLICH  
(1965-2016)

On 08<sup>th</sup> April, Francesco passed away after a difficult fight with a terrible illness. But throughout that tragic period Francesco had always remained optimistic, smiling with colleagues and friends. He was a noble and selfless soul, always ready to help people. We lost a great colleague and overall a true Friend.

Born in Rome on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1965, he was a big fan of the Juventus Football Club and an expert in wine tasting. He was also an enthusiastic tennis player. We met Francesco in 1998 when we worked at the Marine Biology Laboratory of Trieste (LBM), and since then we spent almost 20 years together, sharing the same room.

Francesco studied at the Faculty of Biology at the University of Pisa. After his graduation on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1993, he was employed in LBM of Trieste for CHN, Total Suspended Matter, microalgal culture and sedimentological analyses. There he discovered his love of the sea and participated in several oceanographic expeditions. Francesco was also a diver and an instructor in marine biology for scuba divers.

In 2005, we worked at the Regional Agency for the Protection of the Environment of Friuli Venezia Giulia (ARPA FVG) and he was assigned the referent position for ecotoxicological assay and elemental analyses. Francesco adopted an innovative application for the monitoring of sediment quality called the Sediment Quality Triad (SQT). This approach was applied in the Lagoons of Marano and Grado and nearby underwater sewage discharges as an assessment tool for evaluating the extent of sediment degradation resulting from contaminants released due to human activity. The evaluation focuses on three main components: sediment chemistry, sediment toxicity tests using aquatic organisms,

and macrozoobenthic communities. Although the SQT approach does not provide a cause-and-effect relationship linking concentrations of individual chemicals to adverse biological effects, it does provide an assessment of sediment quality commonly used to explain sediment characteristics quantitatively.

Anyway, Francesco's greatest passion was wine, and in 2008 he even obtained a certified sommelier qualification from the Italian Sommelier Association. We remember that time very well, for thanks to him we discovered the world of wine.

In 2014, our work focused on the environmental monitoring connected to channel dredging in the lagoon. We coordinated in particular the monitoring on the bivalve *Ensis minor*, a very important commercial stock influenced by dredging activity off the tourism plant in Lignano Sabbiadoro. In this occasion, Francesco proposed to test the condition index and air survival time of the mollusks in order to assess any stress condition for these organisms due to dredging activity in the surrounding area.

The last time we worked together it was in the laboratory, measuring these bivalve samples. The room was hot, and adding to that the noise of the equipment inside, the smell of the samples, the repetitive work of measuring a lot of specimens... We were so tired of that boring work, but suddenly Francesco said: who knows, maybe one day we will remember this moment as a happy time!

You were a wise man, Francesco, now we understand the meaning of that statement: whenever we are tired or bored while on the job, we should be nevertheless happy and grateful of the opportunity!

Grazie Maestro

Nicola Bettoso & Alessandro Acquavita

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