

# THE PRESENCE OF *TENACIBACULUM MARITIMUM* IN FARMED MARINE FISH IN GREECE

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**Objective.** The bacterium *Tenacibaculum maritimum* is the main causative agent of flexibacteriosis in marine fish. In Greece, flexibacteriosis can cause high mortalities in farmed marine fish. The main purpose of this study is the investigation of *T. matitimum*'s presence in cultured species in Greece.

**Materials and methods.** Three seasonal samplings were performed on various cultured marine species (*Sparus aurata*, *Dicentrarchus labrax*, *Puntazzo puntazzo*, *Pagrus pagrus*, *Umbrina cirrosa*, *Pagellus erithrinus*). The total number of fish examined was 55, 126, 29, 29, 22, and 40, respectively. For the microbiological isolation, samples were taken from skin, gills and internal organs. The nutrient substrates used for the cultivation of the pathogens were Cytophaga agar, Marine agar, F.M.M. and TSA+2%NaCl. After cultivation, bacteria were examined microscopically and molecularly for their final identification.

**Results-conclusion.** The microbiological trials indicated that the most effective nutrient substrate for the isolation and growth of *T. matitimum* from gill samples is Cytophaga agar and from skin samples is F.M.M (*Flexibacter maritimum* media) (19-21<sup>0</sup>C). Microbiological trials from internal organs of all species, failed to produce the pathogen. TSA +2%NaCl is not suitable for the isolation of *T. matitimum*. The presence of the pathogen seems to be related with high water temperatures. *Pagrus pagrus* is more sensitive to flexibacteriosis compared to other species of this study.

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