

Research program IZS VE 15/13

Improvement in the production of Manila clams (*T. philippinarum*) and Pacific cupped oysters (*C. gigas*): the influence of pathogens on productivity in different environments and with different farming/harvesting techniques

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In recent years there has been a marked decline in national Manila clam and Pacific cupped oyster production for various reasons: variations in environmental parameters, overharvesting and the presence of pathogens. The extent to which each parameter can trigger distress potentially leading to mortality, in some cases mass mortality, is not yet clear. Within the scope of the Italian Ministry of Health Current Research Programme 2012-2014, "Survey on the prevalence of disease in bivalve molluscs and a study of host-parasite interaction to determine actual impact on national production levels," the aim of the project is to:

- reach the clam and oyster production areas affected by mortality/fall in production by making use of the NRL for fish, mollusc and crustacean disease contact network;
- select the most suitable locations for diagnostic investigation;
- collect ad hoc samples (active surveillance) to identify the presence of pathogens in relation to: age of the mollusc, season, salinity of the environment/trophic status, farming/harvesting techniques;
- process the collected data.