



# **BOOK of ABSTRACTS**

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## **POSTER CONTRIBUTION**

### **The Elasmobranchs collections in the Italian Natural History Museums**

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The museums of natural history are the headquarters of the history of our Planet and are fundamental institutions, highly useful for the dissemination of scientific culture in the world. The preserved specimens have gone from simple collections of objects to teaching and scientific research tools. The museum exhibits, in addition to witnessing the presence of species in their natural environments, have become an important resource for research, necessary to understand the phylogenetic and taxonomic relationships among also the living organisms, nowadays increasingly threatened with extinction due to anthropogenic reasons. With the global biodiversity crisis, the museums of natural history have assumed the role of bank of the biodiversity definitively.

The Mediterranean basin is known as one of the biodiversity 'hot-spot' in relation to the presence of many endemic species. However, since the Mediterranean is one of the most exploited seas on the Planet, the biodiversity is highly threatened. Regarding the study on Italian sea-life conservation, the elasmobranch collections of the museums become an important heritage favorable to improve the biological knowledges and the historical trends of this species community. For these reasons, a detailed study on the chondrichthyans collections stored in the main Italian museums was carried out. We present here a general picture of the all information gathered thanks to the collaboration among various Italian institutions.