

## Press realese



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The Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO) obtains massive bluefin tuna spawns made spontaneously without hormonal induction

After three years in captivity, tuna has reached a record level of domestication

**Scientists at the Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO) have obtained viable bluefin tuna eggs at its facilities in Murcia, without hormonal induction. This is something that had never previously happened far from their natural spawning area and this demonstrates the advanced domestication level of the individuals used in this project.**

Since last June 18th, at the facilities of the Oceanographic Centre of Murcia of the Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO), viable bluefin tuna eggs are being spawned daily within the framework of the SELFDOTT project (From capture based to SELF-sustained aquaculture and Domestication Of bluefin tuna, *Thunnus Thynnus*), coordinated by Dr. Fernando de la Gándara.

This is the second consecutive year that the IEO has been able to obtain viable bluefin tuna eggs. Unlike the first occasion, this time it has not been necessary to induce the spawning with hormonal implants it has occurred spontaneously, something that has never previously happened in aquaculture facilities far from the Blue Fin Tuna's natural spawning areas and this therefore shows that the breeding tunas have reached an important degree of domestication as a result of their stay at the experimental farm for more than three years.

The eggs which exceeded ten million viable ones in a single day, are being collected in

two experimental nursery facilities that SELFDOTT project has in El Gorguel (Cartagena), managed by the Caladeros del Mediterráneo Company, a project participant.

The eggs will be processed in a facility of the IEO in Murcia. One part will be sent to various project partners' laboratories: IFREMER Palavas in France, the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (HCMR) on the island of Crete (Greece) and the National Center for Mariculture (NCM) in Eilat (Israel) and the rest will be used to start experiments on larval rearing, that SELFDOTT foresee in the Technical Annex, and which will be carried out at the Murcia Oceanographic Centre of the IEO under the supervision of Aurelio Ortega.

During the last larval rearing season IEO researchers completed several experiments to increase our understanding on the conditions of temperature, photoperiod, hydrodynamics and food most suitable to achieve higher survival and growth indexes. The last surviving tuna juvenile was 73 days old, reaching a height of 14 cm and weighing 30 g. After this experience, the scientists expect to improve on the success achieved last season.

The production of viable bluefin tuna eggs from captive individuals is the first step in the independent production of this species, without expending the endangered natural stocks, so that aquaculture can supply the market in the future in a sustainable manner.

The Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO) is a public research organization and part of the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, dedicated to research in marine science; especially in relation to scientific knowledge of oceans, sustainability of fisheries resources and marine environment. The IEO represents Spain in most of the international science and technology forums related to the sea and its resources. IEO has nine coastal oceanographic centres, five experimental aquaculture plants, twelve tide gauge stations, one receiving station for satellite images and a fleet of six research vessels.

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