

Killer Alga in the Mediterranean – Mira Heesakkers and Erik-Jan Malta (from magazine coast line)

The toxic seaweed *Caulerpa taxifolia* threatens sea grass ecosystems in the Mediterranean. This was published as the most recent ecological disaster in Volume 9 No. 2000-9 of the magazine Coastline. In the seventies, the tropical alga was discovered as the perfect decoration for aquaria by the tropical aquarium in Stuttgart. After that public aquaria all over Europe acquired cuttings of the alga. Now it has colonised a wide range of habitats in the Mediterranean and its aggressive way of competing with other species threatens the whole ecosystem. Starting from Monaco in 1982, the species was observed on the Balearics, the coast of Tunisia, at Sicily and the Adriatic. As wintering Cormorants often frequent the areas with eel grass *Posidonia* meadows with colonisation by the new species may also affect the carrying capacity of these regions.

Laser guns and Cormorants - Doris Thienel

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Referring to the use of laser guns type 3B for frightening birds (see also proceedings listed above) Doris Thienel sends us two papers about the effect laser weapons may have on the vertebrate eye. Especially the paper of Gillow shows the detrimental effects of laser light to the human eye. In 1995 a protocol IV was added to the Convention on Conventional Weapons banning lasers as weapons. The discussion of how to use (see also www.aviandissuader.com/usage_facts.htm) or ban (as stated by NABU, the German NGO on Nature Protection) the use of laser guns to frighten Cormorants has hardly started. Readers may react on this issue which is of importance to future developments with respect to safe harassment techniques.

Gillow, T. 1997. The psychological, social and economic consequences of blinding soldiers. *Medicine, conflict and Survival* 13: 327-332.

Peters, A. 1996. Blinding laser weapons. *Medicine, conflict and Survival* 12: 107-113