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Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring

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*Published:*

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2021.112005>

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This is the final peer-reviewed accepted manuscript of:

Nicolas Greggio; Marco Capolupo; Filippo Donnini; Manfred Birke; Elena Fabbri; Enrico Dinelli:  
*Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon  
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MARINE POLLUTION BULLETIN. Vol. 164 ISSN 0025-326X

DOI: 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2021.112005

The final published version is available online at:

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2021.112005>

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# Marine Pollution Bulletin

## Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring --Manuscript Draft--

<b>Manuscript Number:</b>	MPB-D-20-01666R2
<b>Article Type:</b>	Research Paper
<b>Keywords:</b>	Coastal lagoon; Sediment geochemistry; Metal bioaccumulation; biomarkers; Biomonitoring.
<b>Corresponding Author:</b>	Nicolas Greggio, Ph.D University of Bologna Ravenna, ITALY
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<b>Order of Authors:</b>	Nicolas Greggio, Ph.D Marco Capolupo, Ph.D. Filippo Donnini, Ph.D. Manfred Birke, Ph.D. Elena Fabbri, Prof. Enrico Dinelli, Prof.
<b>Abstract:</b>	Coastal lagoons are complex environments threatened by natural and anthropogenic stressors. Here, we tested the effectiveness of combining physical, geochemical and chemical measurements with biomarker data obtained in field-exposed marine mussels ( <i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i> ) as a biomonitoring strategy for a highly pressured lagoon (Pialassa Baiona, Ravenna, Italy). Data showed a spatial trend of sediment contamination by Hg, Pt, Au, Ag, Mo, Re, Cd, Pd and Zn. Local conditions of high water temperature/low conductivity were detected among selected sites. After a 30-day in situ exposure, Ag and Hg were the most bioaccumulated elements (10 and 5 folds, respectively) in mussels followed by Sb, Al, Ti and Fe. Decreased survival, lysosomal dysfunctions, increased metallothionein content and peroxisome proliferation were observed in mussels in relation to metal spatial distribution and physicochemical fluctuations. Overall, this study provides a further confirmation of the role of biomonitoring to reliably assess the environmental quality of highly pressured lagoons.

Greggio et al. Manuscript Number: **MPB-D-20-01666R1**

Dear Editor

Marine Pollution Bulletin

Dec 28th, 2020

Please find enclosed the revised manuscript authored by Greggio, Capolupo, Donnini, Birke, Fabbri and Dinelli entitled: *Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring*

We are grateful for the confirmed overall appreciation given to our work, and for the pertinent comments we received to improve the manuscript quality.

Almost all suggestions have been accepted and very clear explanations have been provided where necessary. Justification to the use of only inorganic pollutants has been included. Detailed argumentation on the organic pollutants has been provided in order to clarify their role in the work. We do hope more clarity and better focus have been reached.

Specific responses to the Reviewers' comments are provided in a separate file and changes have been highlighted on a second copy of the manuscript for easy of reading.

We do hope the revised manuscript meets the Reviewers' requests and may be considered suitable for publication on Marine Pollution Bulletin

Best Regards,

Your Sincerely

Corresponding Author  
Nicolas Greggio



# Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring

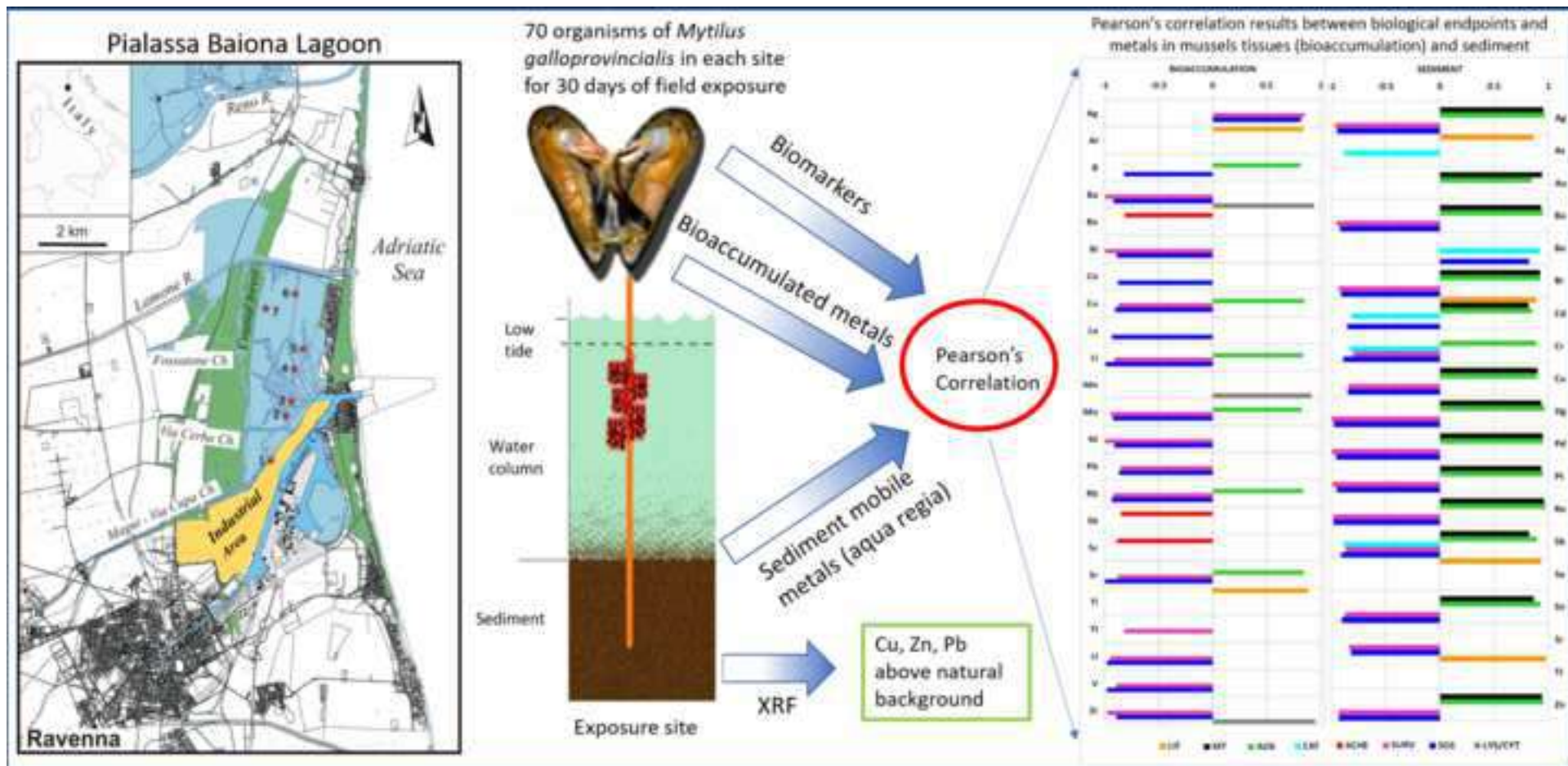
## Authors:

Greggio Nicolas, Capolupo Marco, Filippo Donnini, Manfred Birke, Fabbri Elena, Dinelli Enrico

## REVISION 2 - RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

COMMENT	RESPONSE	POSITION
<b>Reviewer #1</b>		
<p>Reviewer #1: The manuscript reports an interesting study on the application of an integrated approach (geochemical and chemical measurements with biomarker data obtained in field-exposed marine mussels) for the evaluation of the environmental quality of a lagoon and despite the necessary amount of information to be reported, the authors have made an great effort to condense all the information.</p> <p>I noted that some recommendations of the other referees were accepted, improving the manuscript. The strong points of this article are: i) the strategy based on the integration of the water physico-chemical parameters and the sediment geochemical data with the measurements of the metal bioaccumulation and biomarkers in mussels. ii) the description and discussion of the results of the various lines of evidence carried out iii) the choice of to determine elements seldom analysed in sediments for environmental aims, and well described in the discussion also linking them with the possible sources of contamination.</p> <p>However, there are some aspects that are missing or need to be more detailed that I would like to highlight</p>	<p>Thanks for the appreciation</p>	
<p>The study is focused on the determination of only metals in sediments and their bioaccumulation in mussels, but in my opinion the <b>reason for this choice should be well explained</b> in the manuscript, having described the lagoon as an environment contaminated by both metals and organic pollutants , and therefore also the latter can contribute to the biological effects on mussels.</p>	<p>A part has been added in the introduction chapter in order to justify the choice of working only with inorganic pollutants. In fact, most studies in the area involved organic pollutants and no complete information exist on inorganic pollutants in sediments and in mussels. Moreover, few information exists on the integration of a complete inorganic pollutants suite and biomarkers .</p>	<p>Introduction chapter Lines 86-101</p>
<p>With regard to organic contaminants, in the final part of the discussion when the overall health status of the mussels of each station is evaluated, the presence of organic xenobiotics (page 23) plays a decisive role in some stations, even if haven't been reported the type of contaminants nor their concentrations. The role of organic contaminants seems a bit weak in this discussion because it relates to trends in measured AOX (Acyl-Co A oxidase), but positive correlated also with metals, and to data on PCB and PAH concentrations measured in previous studies, not reporting however when they were conducted and citing references of some years ago. It is difficult to correlate biomarker outcomes with contaminant concentrations in sediments of</p>	<p>The presence of organic contaminants was not evaluated in this study; we apologize if we did not correctly explain this; perhaps, we did not clarify the principle of the data integration system used to assess the overall mussel health status. The aim of this study was to evaluate the validity of combining geochemical data (i.e. metal concentrations in sediments), metal bioaccumulation and biomarker responses as a suitable tool for coastal lagoon biomonitoring; consequently, the assessment of other organics was not included in the analytical design. However, since we analyzed a wide battery of biomarkers validated in mussels, and since some of these parameters (i.e. AOX) is activated prevalently by POPs exposure, the data integration through the Mussel Expert System (MES) identified the onset of stressful conditions associated to the possible presence of POPs, notably in the sites where mussels showed increase AOX. For these reasons, the plot reporting the MES output (Fig.6) presents symbols corresponding to the "presence of POPs" as suggested by the</p>	<p>Page 10, section 2.6.5., Lines 276-285 and pages 24-25, Lines 604 – 610</p>

<p>which it is not known when and where they were sampled and analyzed.</p>	<p>Expert System output. Moreover, we did not perform any statistical correlation analyses with data from previous studies, but rather pointed out that the stress level identified by the MES in relation to the presence of POPs is coherent with previous reports of PAHs across the lagoon. In line with the Reviewer's comments, we added clarifications about these points in the Materials and Method section (Page 10, section 2.6.5., L276-285) and in Results &amp; Discussion (MES paragraph, page 24-25, L 604 – 610).</p>	
<p>For these reasons, if it is considered important to introduce the role of organic contaminants in the overall assessment then it should review all discussion on a stronger basis and be reported i.e when the sampling was performed, information not present in the materials and methods. This information is not important in the discussion of the data relating to metals since all the measurements were performed on the same samples and in the same period.</p>	<p>Based on the considerations reported in the previous comment, we could not add any method or data on organics, since they were not analysed nor this was included as an objective of this study. However, we acknowledge that POPs, such as PAHs, have previously been reported in the lagoon and that, apart from AOX, some biomarkers of general stress (i.e. LMS, NL and/or LYS/CYT) are known to be modulated in mussels by pollutants of diverse nature, including organic and inorganic compounds, as well as their co-exposure (e.g. Capolupo et al., 2017, in bibliography). Hence, to meet the Reviewer's arguments, we added notions in the Results &amp; Discussion section to address i) the potential relationships between chemical data from this study and those previously reported for other (organic) pollutants y (page 14, L382 – 390) and ii) the possible cumulative effects of metals and organics on the magnitude of biological effects observed in transplanted organisms (page 21, L 534 – 538)</p>	<p>page 14, Lines 382 – 390 and page 21, Lines 534 – 538</p>
<p>Another gap, in my opinion, is not having considered the grain size analysis of the sediments, even if most likely the lagoon sediments collected in the different stations are homogeneous, this information could be important considering how the concentrations of metals are related to the silt/clay fraction.</p>	<p>Authors agree with reviewer and a section has been added at the beginning of the sediment data section. Sediment grain size has been estimated through the major elements geochemical composition as established by Dinelli et al. (2007)</p>	<p>Section 3.2 Page 11 Lines 319-326</p>
<p>line 30 page 11 replace S3 and S5 at sites 3 and 5</p>	<p>Modified</p>	



# Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring

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## Highlights

- Total Zn, Cu and Pb in sediments exceed the natural background concentrations;
- Sediments are enriched in mobile Hg, Pt, Au and Ag, with a strong S-N gradient;
- Exposed mussels bioaccumulated Ag (x10) and Hg (x5) compare to reference;
- Sediment concentration of Ag, Au, Ba, Bi, Sb affect mussel physiological parameters;
- Geochemical and physiological endpoints proved suitable for lagoon biomonitoring;



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University of Bologna, Inter-Departmental Research Centre for Environmental Science (CIRSA), Via S. Alberto 163, 48123 Ravenna, Italy.

## Abstract:

Coastal lagoons are complex environments threatened by natural and anthropogenic stressors. Here, we tested the effectiveness of combining physical, geochemical and chemical measurements with biomarker data obtained in field-exposed marine mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) as a biomonitoring strategy for a highly pressured lagoon (Pialassa Baiona, Ravenna, Italy). Data showed a spatial trend of sediment contamination by Hg, Pt, Au, Ag, Mo, Re, Cd, Pd and Zn. Local conditions of high water temperature/low conductivity were detected among selected sites. After a 30-day in situ exposure, Ag and Hg were the most bioaccumulated elements (10 and 5 folds, respectively) in mussels followed by Sb, Al, Ti and Fe. Decreased survival, lysosomal dysfunctions, increased metallothionein content and peroxisome proliferation were observed in mussels in relation to metal spatial distribution and physico-chemical fluctuations. Overall, this study provides a further confirmation of the role of biomonitoring to reliably assess the environmental quality of highly pressured lagoons.

**Keywords:** Coastal lagoon; Sediment geochemistry; Metal bioaccumulation; Biomarkers; Biomonitoring;

## Funding sources

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

# 1 Introduction

Being at the boundary between terrestrial and marine ecosystems coastal lagoons are, by definition, unstable and complex systems morphologically dependent and shaped by natural continental evolution (rivers sediment transport and discharge), sea level variations, coastal dynamics, storminess and local geologic processes (e.g. subsidence) (Bird, 1994; Newton et al., 2014). In natural conditions, coastal lagoons receive fresh and nutrient-rich inputs from the land-side, that combined with shallow, warm and relatively stable water, sustain a complex food chain (from algae, to macro benthos, fish and swamps birds), providing a multitude of life-supporting (Aliaume et al., 2007; Dominik et al., 2014; Petry et al., 2016).

The naturally complicated equilibrium of these environments has often been impacted by strong anthropic development in the last century, especially in those lagoons close to major cities and harbours. With the beginning of demographic boom and of the correlated industrial development, lagoons have been converted into commercial ports or industrial areas and in the worst case as processing water disposal sites (Guerra, 2012; Guerra et al., 2014).

Water and sediment geochemistry of lagoon environments have been widely explored in order to define water status (Mollema et al., 2013; Greggio et al., 2020), sediment provenance and local background concentrations (Migani et al., 2015; Borghesi et al., 2016; Greggio et al., 2018a) or levels of occurring pollutants, notably heavy metals (Nazneen et al., 2019; Saidi et al., 2019), organic compounds (León et al., 2017; Mattes et al., 2018) and emerging contaminants (Pignotti et al., 2017; Pignotti and Dinelli, 2018).

The geochemical characterization of sediments and water is important, but alone often does not allow for an accurate and reliable evaluation of the environmental status of lagoon ecosystems (Carvalho et al., 2014; Dahms, 2014; Moreno-González et al., 2015). Physico-chemical properties and geological background of lagoons can influence the response of exposed organisms to pollutants, inducing potential interactive effects due to changes in bioavailability and toxicity (Migani et al., 2015; Piggott et al., 2015; Borghesi et al., 2016). Chemical assessments fail in detecting biotransformation products, eventually more toxic than the parental compounds (Buryškova et al., 2006; Braga et al., 2018), and in estimating synergistic/antagonistic effects induced on the fitness of the exposed biota (Lari et al., 2017). For these considerations, multidisciplinary applications integrating geological/chemical parameters, pollutants bioaccumulation and biological effects may represent a promising approach to assess the environmental status of highly pressured coastal systems.

71 In the framework of biomonitoring programs of marine areas, particular attention has recently  
1  
22 been addressed to the assessment of biomarkers of environmental stress (Turja et al., 2014;  
3  
43 Capolupo et al., 2017; Mansour et al., 2020). Biomarkers are defined as indices of either exposure  
5  
674 or effect of pollutants induced at biochemical, cellular and physiological level on exposed organisms  
7  
75 (Viarengo et al., 2007a). They have successfully been used in association to bioaccumulation  
9  
1076 analyses to characterize “sub-organism” toxicological dynamics occurring in highly contaminated  
11  
1177 environments and provide crucial and early-warning information for planning urgent intervention  
12  
1378 or following the effects of remediation plans (Donnini et al., 2007; Capolupo et al., 2017). The  
14  
1579 simultaneous analysis of a wide set of biomarkers offers accurate information on the sub-lethal  
16  
1780 alterations induced by multiple stressors and may allow to correlate observed effects with specific  
18  
1981 classes of pollutants (Shaw et al., 2011; Turja et al., 2014). Moreover, biomarkers provide a unique  
20  
2182 contribution to determine the synergistic effect of pollutant mixtures, even when single  
22  
2383 contaminants occur at low concentrations. Biomarker-based assessments are thus currently  
24  
2584 promoted under the current EU legislation for monitoring surveys of marine and transitional  
26  
2785 environments (2000/60/EC; 2008/56/EC; Piló et al., 2017).

28  
2986 The aim of this work was to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating water physico-chemical  
30  
3187 data, sediment geochemistry, metal bioaccumulation and biomarker measurements as a  
32  
3388 biomonitoring strategy for highly contaminated coastal lagoons. The study was conducted in a  
34  
3589 shallow and brackish basin located along the North-Western coast of the Adriatic Sea (Pialassa  
36  
3790 Baiona, Ravenna, Italy). In this area, previous works highlighted the presence of organic pollutants  
38  
3991 in sediments (Trombini et al., 2003; Vassura et al., 2005; Fabbri et al., 2006; Guerra, 2012; Guerra  
40  
4192 et al., 2014;) and their potential for being bioaccumulated by mussels (Fabbri et al., 2006) and clams  
42  
4393 (Vassura et al., 2005). Inorganic pollutants were less investigated and the current information is  
44  
4594 limited to few elements, as Cd, Cu, Hg, Ni, Pb and Zn (Trombini et al., 2003; Matteucci et al., 2005;  
46  
4795 Guerra et al., 2014). A recent hydrogeochemical study reported water physico-chemical alterations  
48  
4996 and the abundance of seldom analysed metals (Ag and Sb among others) in surface drainage water  
50  
5197 flowing into the investigated lagoon (Greggio et al., 2020). Therefore, a wide spectrum of elements  
52  
5398 was measured in sediments collected from different sites within the lagoon and in adult specimens  
54  
5599 of the Mediterranean mussel *Mytilus galloprovincialis* transplanted *in situ* at the same locations.  
56  
5790 Finally, a battery of biological endpoints was measured in mussels, including lysosomal responses,  
58  
5991 oxidative stress parameters and biomarkers of exposure to specific classes of pollutants.

102 **2 Materials and methods**

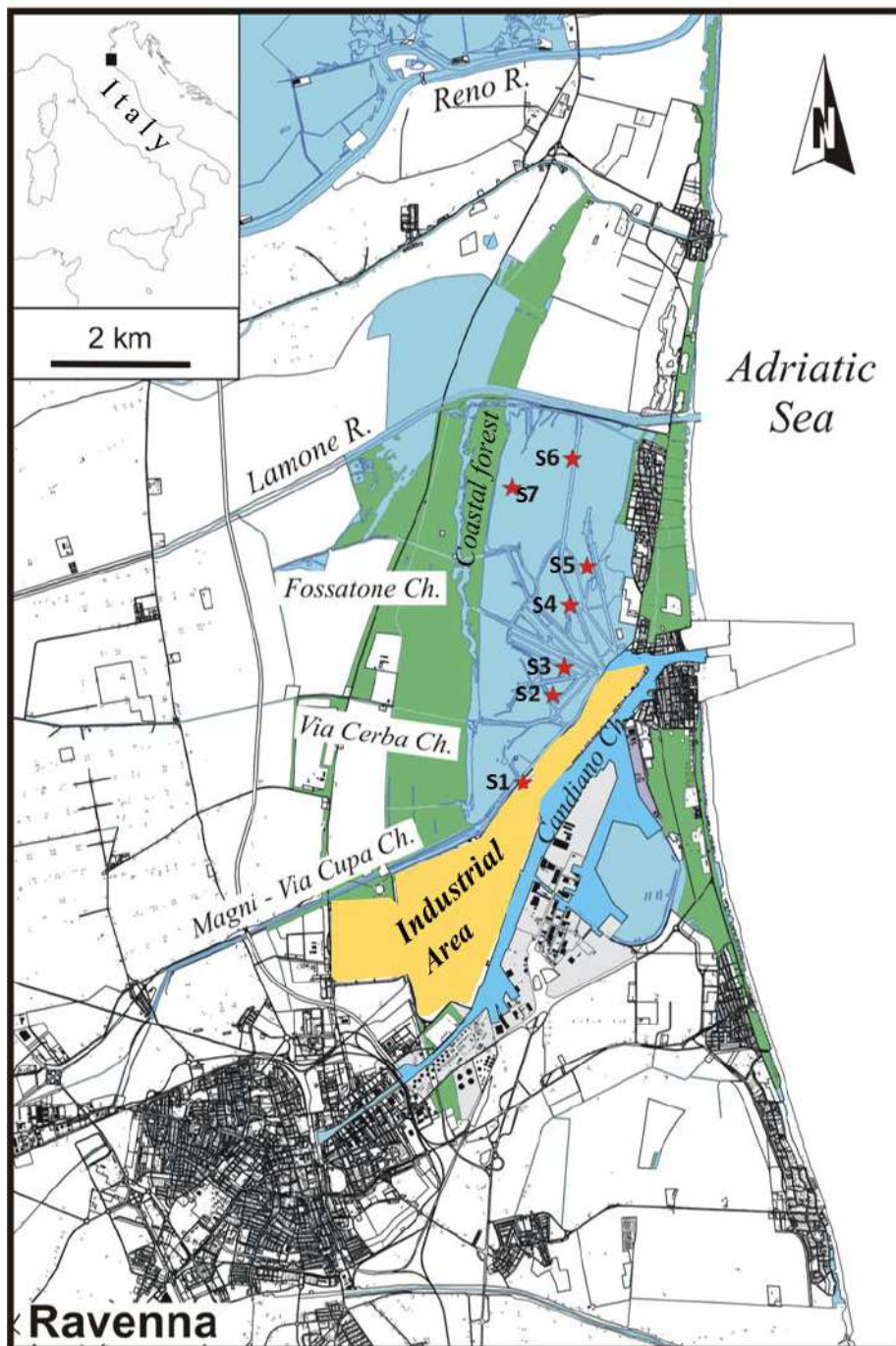
103 **2.1 Study area and sampling sites**

104 The Pialassa Baiona (Fig. 1) is a brackish lagoon located northward the town of Ravenna (Italy),  
105 between 44°27'55.5"N and 44°31'31.3"N and 12°14'9.7"E and 12°16'10"E that cover an area of  
106 about 10 km<sup>2</sup>. The lagoon is part of a barrier-lagoon system that characterized the historical  
107 evolution of the Adriatic Sea coastline in the area (Amorosi et al., 1999). It is formed by small,  
108 shallow ponds (0.5–1 m depth) and deeper artificial channels (2–3 m depth) that permit the  
109 incessant water exchange with the Adriatic Sea driven by tides. It is connected to the Adriatic Sea  
110 only through the Candiano Channel that also is the Ravenna operative industrial harbour. The  
111 Pialassa Baiona is mainly adopted by local citizens as recreational fishing and hunting site and few  
112 clam farming activities exist in the northernmost portion.

113 The lagoon receives freshwaters from the west through three main channels (Fossatone,  
114 Cerba and Cupa-Magni channels) which drain agricultural lands and collect effluents from industrial  
115 and municipal treatment plants, located in the southernmost part (Fig. 1). The drainage water  
116 entering the lagoon are often rich in nutrients and dissolved metals (Mollema et al., 2013; Greggio  
117 et al., 2018b). The highest concentration of nutrients, as well as the highest bacteriological content,  
118 are observed in the southern part of the lagoon, in proximity of the via Cupa channel (Soprani et al.,  
119 1994). In addition, during the 60s and 70s, high quantities of chemical compounds were discharged  
120 into the lagoon through the via Cupa and Magni channels, carrying wastewater from the industrial  
121 area close to the southern border (Fabbri et al., 1998).

122 Previous investigations showed that high levels of metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons  
123 (PAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other pollutants occurred in surface, subsurface and  
124 suspended sediments with N-S increasing gradient (Trombini et al., 2003; Matteucci et al., 2005;  
125 Guerra, 2012; Guerra et al., 2014). On these bases, seven sites were selected within the Pialassa  
126 Baiona lagoon in order to cover its overall geochemical complexity and spatial trend of  
127 anthropogenic pressures (Fig. 1). All sites (S1 to S7) were investigated for sediment geochemistry,  
128 while metal bioaccumulation and biomarker responses were measured on mussels transplanted  
129 into six sites (S1, S2, S3, S5, S6 and S7), since *in situ* transplantation into site S4 was not possible for  
130 technical reasons. Mussels were exposed into the lagoon for 30 days, which is acknowledged as a  
131 suitable time for sessile organisms to bioaccumulate contaminants at environmentally  
132 representative levels and to develop physiological responses to “in site” pollution (Viarengo et al.,  
133 2007b). Since previous investigations highlighted a lesser incidence of metals and organic

134 compounds in the north-western part of the lagoon (Trombini et al., 2003; Fabbri et al., 2006;  
135 Donnini et al., 2007; Franzellitti et al., 2010), Site 7 (S7), located at about 0.5 km from the north-  
136 western border, was defined as internal control site for both geochemical and biological  
137 assessments.



538  
539 **Figure 1. Location map and sampling points (S1 to S7) within the Piassa Baiona lagoon (Ravenna, Italy).** The  
540 abbreviations "R." and "Ch." refer to the main rivers and/or channels which supply freshwater to the lagoon. The  
541 yellow shape represents the industrial area settled at the south-eastern boundary of the Piassa Baiona lagoon.

143 2.2 *Field activities and measurements*

1  
1244 In order to have a better characterization of the environmental conditions influencing the  
3  
1445 organisms' response, measurements for physico-chemical parameters were conducted at each site.  
5  
146 During mussel field exposure (from June 1st to June 30th) six vertical profiles (10 cm resolution) of  
7  
147 electrical conductivity, temperature and pH, using a CTD probe were conducted.

9  
148  
11  
1249 2.3 *Sediment geochemistry*

13  
1450 The bottom sediments were sampled at each site with a manual corer using a Plexiglas tube.  
15  
1461 After the extrusion, the sections 0 - 5 cm was retained for analysis, placed in polyethylene bottles,  
17  
1462 were stored at -25 °C. For geochemical analysis, sediment aliquots were dried at 60 °C and  
19  
1463 homogenized by grinding in agate mortar. On the bottom sediments total elements concentration  
21  
1464 by X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) and pseudo-total (mobile/available) concentrations by  
23  
1465 aqua regia digestion (AR) have been performed.

25  
1466 The total metal content of 29 chemical elements (SiO<sub>2</sub>, TiO<sub>2</sub>, Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, MnO, MgO, CaO,  
27  
1467 Na<sub>2</sub>O, K<sub>2</sub>O, P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, S, As, Ba, Ce, Co, Cr, Cu, La, Nb, Ni, Pb, Rb, Sc, Sr, Th, V, Y, Zn, Zr) has been measured  
29  
1468 by XRF, using a Philips PW 1480 spectrometer equipped with a Rh tube on pressed powder pellets  
31  
1469 following matrix correction methods suggested by Franzini et al. (1972; 1975) Leoni and Saitta  
33  
1470 (1976) and Leoni et al. (1982). Thirty international reference materials were used for the instrument  
35  
1471 calibration, while accuracy was evaluated using 4 international reference samples, namely BR, BCR-  
37  
1472 1, TB and AGV-1 (Govindaraju, 1984). The average accuracy was higher than 5 % for trace-element  
39  
1473 determinations. In order to quantify the pseudo total concentration, 15 g of sediment were digested  
41  
1474 with a modified aqua regia solution of equal parts concentrated HCl, HNO<sub>3</sub> and deionized H<sub>2</sub>O for  
43  
1475 one hour in a heating block of hot water bath at the Bureau Veritas Laboratories in Vancouver  
45  
1476 (Canada). Fifty-three chemical elements (Ag, Al, As, Au, B, Ba, Be, Bi, Ca, Cd, Ce, Co, Cr, Cs, Cu, Fe,  
47  
1477 Ga, Ge, Hf, Hg, In, K, La, Li, Mg, Mn, Mo, Na, Nb, Ni, P, Pb, Pd, Pt, Rb, Re, S, Sb, Sc, Se, Sn, Sr, Ta, Te,  
49  
1478 Th, Ti, Tl, U, V, W, Y, Zn, Zr) were analysed by Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-  
51  
1479 MS).

53  
1480 The volatile content (including humidity, organic matter, water incorporated in the lattice of  
55  
1481 clay minerals, carbon dioxide in the carbonate minerals) was evaluated by thermal analysis using a  
57  
1482 Setaram TAG24 double furnace apparatus, with simultaneous registration of thermogravimetric  
59  
1483 (TG), derivative thermogravimetric (DTG), differential thermal analysis (DTA). A CO<sub>2</sub> atmosphere

174 was used to increase the temperature of carbonate decomposition and the carbonate content was  
175 estimated by quantifying the weight loss at temperature > 700 °C.

176

## 177 2.4 Mussel collection and handling

178 Adult specimens of the Mediterranean mussel (*M. galloprovincialis*) with a shell-length of 5 ±  
179 1 cm were collected by professional fishermen of the “Cooperativa CONISUB” (Marina di Ravenna,  
180 Italy) along the north-western Adriatic Sea coast in high quality marine areas (Zone A) and  
181 immediately transferred to the laboratory in seawater tanks with continuous aeration. Prior to the  
182 *in situ* deployment, all animals were acclimatized for 6 days in aquaria containing 60 L of aerated  
183 natural seawater (at a ratio of 1 mussel/L) at 16 °C and natural photoperiod, and fed daily on an  
184 algal slurry (Coral Diet Filtrator, Xaquia, Italy) after water renewal. Seventy organisms were dissected  
185 prior to the *in situ* transplantations (time 0, T0) for bioaccumulation and biological endpoint  
186 analyses. Digestive glands and gills were immediately collected, frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored  
187 at –80 °C until analysed. At the same time six groups of seventy organisms each were put in fishnet  
188 bags, fixed to piles and driven into the sediment at sites S1, S2, S3, S5, S6 and S7 (Fig. 1) at about 50  
189 cm from the bottom to ensure continuous submersion during the whole exposure period. Deployed  
190 mussels were regularly controlled at three days intervals and dead mussels were eventually  
191 recorded for survival assessment. Since previous investigations identified the Magni channel as a  
192 heavily polluted site (Fabbri et al., 2000; 2003; Matteucci et al., 2005), three additional fishnet bags,  
193 with seventy organisms each, were transplanted into S1 to execute biomarkers with shorter  
194 timestep.

195

## 196 2.5 Metal bioaccumulation analysis

197 Metal bioaccumulation was evaluated on mussels prior to the *in situ* deployment (Time 0, T0)  
198 and after 30 days of field exposure into the lagoon. Metal bioaccumulation from each site was used  
199 to calculate the bioaccumulation factor as enrichment/depletion compared to T0. Samples (0.2 g  
200 each) were digested in a microwave system with ultrapure HNO<sub>3</sub>. The resulting fluid was diluted by  
201 adding deionized water to a final volume of 30 mL, at the Department of Environmental Science of  
202 the University of Siena. Analytical blanks and certified reference material were included in the  
203 analysis, specifically the mussel tissue ERM-CE278 (*Mytilus edulis*) from the Institute for Reference  
204 Materials and Measurements, Geel, Belgium.

205

206

207

208

205 The samples were analysed by inductively coupled plasma quadrupole mass spectrometry  
206 (ICP-QMS) using an Agilent 7500ce instrument at the laboratories of the Federal Institute for  
207 Geosciences and Natural Resources in Berlin. Atomic fluorescence spectrometry was used for the  
208 determination of mercury (Instrument PSA 10.035 Millennium Merlin 1631). The Table S1 reports  
209 the results for the investigated elements in the certified reference material. Additional details can  
210 be found in Capolupo et al. (2017).

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## 213 2.6 *Biological endpoints*

### 214 2.6.1 Survival percentage and Stress on Stress

215 The survival (SURV) was calculated as the percentage of mussels found alive over the exposure  
216 period with respect to the initial number of individuals (70 at each site).

217 For Stress on Stress (SOS) assessment, immediately after collection, 15 mussels per site were  
218 subjected to anoxia by air exposure at 15 °C in a humidified chamber. Death symptoms were open  
219 valves and absence of muscular activity. The survival was assessed daily, and results expressed as  
220 the time at which 100% mortality was achieved (Viarengo et al., 2007a).

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### 223 2.6.2 Cytochemical parameters

224 Lysosomal membrane stability (LMS), lysosome to cytoplasm volume ratio (LYS/CYT) and  
225 lipofuscin content (LIF) were assessed in the digestive gland from 20 mussels per each site (N = 20).  
226 After dissection, glands were mounted on specific aluminium supports for cryostat microtomy  
227 (chucks), frozen in N-hexane at -70 °C, and stored at -80 °C. All assessments were performed  
228 according to the UNEP/RAMOGGE manual (1999) on 10 µm-thick gland sections obtained using a  
229 cryostat (MICROM HM 505 N) at -30 °C. The LMS was measured as the time necessary to produce  
230 the maximum staining reaction between the lysosomal hydrolase N-acetyl-β-hexosaminidase and a  
231 specific substrate (Capolupo et al., 2016). Briefly, sections were incubated at 37 °C in a shaking water  
232 bath with a destabilization buffer (0.1 M Na-citrate, pH 4.5) for different times (0, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20,  
233 30 and 40 min), exposed to the substrate naphtol AS-BI N-acetyl-β-D-glucosaminide (Sigma, N4006)  
234 for 20 min and finally stained with the diazonium dye Fast Violet B (Sigma, F1631) (1 mg/ml in 0.1  
235 M phosphate buffer, pH 7.4). For each site, slides not exposed to the destabilization buffer (0 min)  
236 were screened for the LYS/CYT assessment, which was determined by evaluating the cytoplasmic  
237 and lysosomal areas according to Capolupo et al. (2017). The LIF determination was performed

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236 according to Martin-Diaz et al. (2009). Gland sections were fixed in calcium formol and immersed  
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237 for 5 min in an aqueous solution of 1 % ferric chloride and 1 % potassium ferricyanide in a 3:1 ratio.

238 For all lysosomal parameters, tissue sections were assessed under a light microscope  
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239 (Axioskop 40, Carl Zeiss, Milan, Italy) equipped with a 40X objective and a digital camera (AxioCam  
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240 MRc, Carl Zeiss, Milan, Italy) as reported by Capolupo et al. (2016). Results were expressed as  
7  
241 labilization period for LMS, percentage of lysosomal volume inside digestive cells for LYS/CYT and  
9  
242 arbitrary units for LIF.

### 13 14 15 2.6.3 Enzymatic biomarkers 16

17 The acetylcholinesterase activity (AChE) activity was determined in mussel gills as previously  
18 reported (Valbonesi et al., 2003). Gills from 5 mussels per site (N = 5) were homogenized in a 0.1 M  
19 phosphate buffer, pH 7.4, and centrifuged at 9000 ×g at 4 °C for 30 min. Supernatant aliquots were  
20  
21 incubated at 25 °C with 0.5 mM acetylthiocholine iodide (ASCh) and 0.33 mM DTNB (Ellman et al.,  
22  
23 1961), and read at 405 nm for 10 min. Results are reported as nmoles/min/mg protein. The sample  
24  
25 protein concentration was measured according to Lowry et al. (1951).  
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27 For catalase (CAT) assessment, about 50 mg of digestive gland was dissected from 5 mussels  
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29 per site (N = 5), homogenized in 50 mM potassium-phosphate buffer (pH 7.0, 0.5 mM Na<sub>2</sub>EDTA) and  
30  
31 centrifuged at 15,000 g at 4 °C. The CAT activity was determined by measuring the time-dependent  
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33 decrease of absorbance at 240 nm in the presence of 55 mM H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. Data were expressed as  
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35 μmol/min/mg of total protein.  
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37 The Peroxisomal acyl-CoA oxidase (AOX) activity was determined on five pools of 2 digestive  
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39 glands per site (N = 5) according to Orbea et al. (2006). Tissues were homogenized in four volumes  
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41 of TVBE buffer (1 mM sodium bicarbonate, 1 mM EDTA, 0.1 % ethanol and 0.01 % Triton X-100), pH  
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43 7.6 and centrifuged at 500 × g for 15 min at 4 °C. Supernatants were diluted 1:10 in TVBE buffer and  
44  
45 spectrophotometrically assayed for AOX activity at a wavelength of 502 nm. Data were expressed  
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47 as milliunits/mg of AOX protein (equivalent to nmol H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>/min x mg protein).  
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### 50 51 52 2.6.4 Metallothionein content (MT) 53

54 The metallothionein (MT) content was analysed on five pools of 5 mussel digestive glands  
55  
56 (about 1.5 g of tissue) per site according to Viarengo et al. (1997). Final absorbance was measured  
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58 at 410 nm, using reduced glutathione as reference standard. Data were expressed as μg of MT/mg  
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60 tissue.  
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### 2.6.5 Mussel Expert System

Data from biological responses were integrated using the Mussel Expert System (MES) developed by Dagnino et al. (2007) in a unique and synoptic five-level Health Status Index (HSI) ranging from A (healthy) to E (pathological status). The system classification is based on (i) the number of biomarkers altered in the exposed organisms (significant changes greater than 20 % were utilized to evaluate alterations in the health status of the organisms); (ii) the magnitude of the alteration; (iii) the role of the autophagic process and (iv) the level of biological organization affected (i.e., cell, tissue and organism level). For each biomarker/site, the system calculates an Alteration Factor (AF), which is the ratio between biomarker levels from treatments and control, and an Alteration Level (AL), which defines the magnitude of observed alterations based on the AFs magnitude and the biomarker toxicological profile (i.e. increasing, decreasing, bell-shaped). ALs and AFs are then processed by the system applying a set of rules in the “if...then” form in order to calculate the overall HSI associated to the exposure to each site. The simultaneous alterations of general stress parameters (i.e. lysosomal responses) and biomarkers of exposure to specific classes of compounds (e.g. MT for metals; AOX for POPs) is further computed and eventually recognized by the system as an early warning signal regarding the presence or excess of those pollutants in the monitored sites or tested condition.

### 2.7 Data analysis

All data were tested for normal distribution using the Shapiro-Wilk test, while the Levene's test was employed to test the equal variance. Significant differences between S1 to S6 compared to the control site S7 were estimated by a One-Way ANOVA (SigmaStat, SPSS) followed by the Duncan's post-hoc test. The evaluation of potential linear relationships between biological endpoints and physico-chemical parameters (including pH, temperature, electrical conductivity, metal concentrations in sediments and mussel tissues) were conducted through the Pearson's correlation analysis. For all performed tests, significance was established at  $p < 0.05$ . All analyses were performed using the software SigmaPlot 13 (Systat Software Inc. San Jose, CA, USA).

297 **3 Results and discussion**

1  
298 **3.1 Physico-chemical data**

299 The vertical profiles of temperature, pH and electrical conductivity (EC) measured during  
300 mussels field exposure as well as a graphical representation of the temperature, pH and EC vertical  
301 profiles for June 14<sup>th</sup> are presented respectively in Table S2 and in Figure S1 of supplementary  
302 material. The site S1, located in the Magni Channel at the southern side of the lagoon (Fig. 1), is  
303 different from the other sites for all monitored parameters. It shows higher water column  
304 temperature, reduced EC and a lower pH value, for the entire monitoring period (Table S2).  
305 Specifically, S1 shows the lowest EC among the sites with a marked vertical gradient (Fig. S1A) and  
306 it is also the site with the highest temperature, up to 32.3 °C. Moreover, it records the highest  
307 average profile temperature during the surveying period, at least 2 °C constantly higher compared  
308 to all the other sites (Fig. S1B). Site S1 receives freshwater from artificial drainage channel network  
309 surrounding the town of Ravenna (Greggio et al., 2018b). Previous investigations also reported  
310 water temperature fluctuation wider (10-24 °C) in the southernmost channel with respect to the  
311 lagoon average (16-18 °C), which was subjected to variations of about 10 °C within the 24 hours  
312 owing to discharges of cooling water from the nearby industrial site (Franzellitti et al., 2010). A  
313 thermal vertical gradient is also present in S5 probably associated to local limited water circulation  
314 favouring water warming up (Fig. S1A). The pH is the lowest in S1, ranging from 7.2 to 7.8, and with  
315 a marked vertical profile. In all the other sites the pH is instead similar and fairly constant around 8.  
316 Only at S5 the observed pH values are higher (8.0-8.3) for the entire surveying period (Table S2).

317  
318 **3.2 Sediment data**

319 The results of the geochemical analyses are presented in Table 1. According to the  
320 geochemical composition of the major elements (expressed as %), and referencing to the work of  
321 Dinelli et al. (2007) which compared geochemical proxies with grain size analysing borehole samples  
322 in the same geographic area, the Pialassa Baiona bed sediment samples are classified as fine  
323 grained-sediments (with a recalculated SiO<sub>2</sub>/Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> ratio < 3) enriched in carbonates. The sediments  
324 are also rich in organic matter (OM in Table 1, ranging from 1.1 to 3.4) as already reported for  
325 adjacent coastal lagoons (Migani et al., 2015). The bulk geochemical composition is quite  
326 homogeneous among the different sites, with S1 being slightly enriched in carbonates (Table 1).

327 The geochemical results, in terms of total sediment composition, are comparable with those  
 328 reported by Donnini et al. (2007) although the number of sites was different. As far as total  
 329 concentrations are concerned, these are within the range of regional background, as proposed by  
 330 Migani et al. (2015), taking into consideration Holocene data from boreholes in the area not affected  
 331 by anthropogenic inputs (Amorosi et al., 2002; Curzi et al., 2006; Dinelli et al., 2012, Greggio et al.,  
 332 2018a). Except for sites S6 and S7, Zn and Cu concentrations exceed the maximum value observed  
 333 in the background sediments, respectively of 124 and 41 mg/kg (Table 1). In particular, for S1 site  
 334 Zn and Cu total concentrations are double respect to background, respectively 316 and 87 mg/kg,  
 335 in line with concentration detected in the neighbouring Pialassa Piomboni by Pignotti et al. (2018).  
 336 Pb concentrations in S3 and S5 are 30 mg/kg being slightly higher respect to background level  
 337 established at 29 mg/kg by Migani et al. (2015), but certainly lower than Pb concentration in the  
 338 Pialassa Piomboni by Pignotti et al. (2018) where a maximum concentration of 257 mg/kg was  
 339 measured.

341 **Table 1. Results of the chemical analyses on sediments. The table includes either pseudo total Aqua Regia (AR) and**  
 342 **total XRF data. Table includes also the ranges observed in boreholes in the area, considered representative of the**  
 343 **natural background (Amorosi et al., 2002; Curzi et al., 2006). Bold elements exceed natural background. AR DL**  
 344 **indicates Detection Limit for Aqua Regia extraction.**

		S1		S2		S3		S4		S5		S6		S7		Natural background	
		AR DL	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	
34	<b>Ag</b> µg/kg	2	991	-	269	-	268	-	173	-	275	-	179	-	62	-	-
35	<b>Al</b> %	0.01	1.39	6.31	1.41	7.02	1.23	6.98	1.10	6.97	1.35	7.09	1.39	7.07	1.41	6.55	4.4-9.7
36	<b>As</b> mg/kg	0.1	7.8	-	5.9	-	6.1	-	5.9	-	7.8	-	6.8	-	6.7	-	-
37	<b>Au</b> µg/kg	0.2	16.2	-	5.4	-	11.1	-	2.6	-	5.1	-	3.4	-	1	-	-
38	<b>B</b> mg/kg	1	25	-	28	-	26	-	24	-	38	-	33	-	22	-	-
39	<b>Ba</b> mg/kg	0.5	61.9	263	43.7	218	41.8	260	42.6	322	40.1	258	38.7	294	36.5	258	220-530
40	<b>Be</b> mg/kg	0.1	0.4	-	0.7	-	0.7	-	0.8	-	0.5	-	0.6	-	0.6	-	-
41	<b>Bi</b> mg/kg	0.02	0.6	-	0.38	-	0.35	-	0.26	-	0.38	-	0.31	-	0.28	-	-
42	<b>Cd</b> %	0.01	11.27	11.37	7.45	7.51	7.87	7.96	7.34	7.87	6.10	6.65	7.24	7.43	8.61	9.52	0.3-17.2
43	<b>Ce</b> mg/kg	0.01	0.68	-	0.29	-	0.33	-	0.21	-	0.5	-	0.35	-	0.11	-	-
44	<b>Ce</b> mg/kg	0.1	19.4	42	17	55	17.6	71	16.8	52	17.8	64	18.3	42	20.1	58	14-83
45	<b>Co</b> mg/kg	0.1	10.2	12	10.9	11	10.7	12	9.9	11	11.7	14	11.5	12	10.6	11	5-29
46	<b>Cr</b> mg/kg	0.5	70.6	131	57.5	103	51.4	132	47.7	131	59.9	138	59.3	130	47	100	96-270
47	<b>Cs</b> mg/kg	0.02	1.36	-	1.15	-	1.08	-	1.16	-	1.11	-	1.39	-	1.57	-	-
48	<b>Cu</b> mg/kg	<b>0.01</b>	<b>84.1</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51.1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4-41</b>
49	<b>Fe</b> %	0.01	2.17	3.42	2.46	3.92	2.23	3.86	2.00	3.69	2.54	3.83	2.30	3.64	2.36	3.72	2.1-5.3
50	<b>Ga</b> mg/kg	0.1	4.4	-	4.2	-	4	-	3.9	-	4	-	4.2	-	4.4	-	-
51	<b>Ge</b> mg/kg	0.1	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	-
52	<b>Hf</b> mg/kg	0.02	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.04	-	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.05	-	-
53	<b>Hg</b> mg/kg	0.005	25.7	-	1.42	-	1.48	-	1.89	-	2.38	-	2.26	-	0.1	-	-
54	<b>In</b> mg/kg	0.02	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.02	-	0.02	-	0.03	-	0.02	-	0.03	-	-
55	<b>K</b> %	0.01	0.33	1.77	0.36	1.98	0.31	2.06	0.28	2.04	0.39	1.97	0.36	2.04	0.35	2.03	0.9-3.3
56	<b>La</b> mg/kg	0.5	8.3	19	7.7	26	7.3	22	6.9	18	8	20	8.5	34	9.5	20	17-47
57	<b>Li</b> mg/kg	0.1	26.1	-	30.6	-	27.8	-	24.9	-	28.7	-	28	-	28.1	-	-
58	<b>Mg</b> %	0.01	1.37	2.41	1.34	2.38	1.30	2.38	1.22	2.44	1.42	2.54	1.55	2.55	1.58	2.35	2.2-4.2
59	<b>Mn</b> mg/kg	1	531	893	527	865	549	896	513	949	511	801	550	897	644	1396	230-1470
60	<b>Mo</b> mg/kg	0.01	2.67	-	3.33	-	2.61	-	2.28	-	3.34	-	1.57	-	0.54	-	-
61	<b>Na</b> %	0.001	0.85	0.68	0.98	0.69	0.90	0.75	0.65	0.99	1.18	0.67	0.85	0.78	0.42	0.85	0.5-2.1
62	<b>Nb</b> mg/kg	0.02	0.37	15	0.28	13	0.25	13	0.29	14	0.34	16	0.37	10	0.29	13	8-20
63	<b>Ni</b> mg/kg	0.1	50.9	73	56.5	73	50.7	88	46.3	72	55.3	82	51.5	74	46.4	57	39-148
64	<b>P</b> %	0.001	0.11	0.10	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.03-0.08
65	<b>Pb</b> mg/kg	<b>0.01</b>	<b>27.92</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22.71</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22.14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18.16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26.22</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20.71</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11.99</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5-29</b>

1	<b>Pd</b>	µg/kg	10	46	-	10	-	12	-	11	-	10	-	<10	-	<10	-	-
2	<b>Pt</b>	µg/kg	2	37	-	6	-	4	-	4	-	4	-	<2	-	<2	-	-
3	<b>Rb</b>	mg/kg	0.1	24.9	113	22.2	128	20.8	128	22.4	113	22.3	130	25.1	114	29.8	89	56-200
4	<b>Re</b>	µg/kg	1	7	-	1	-	2	-	<1	-	2	-	2	-	<1	-	-
5	<b>S</b>	%	0.02	0.6	-	0.55	-	0.6	-	0.54	-	0.72	-	0.71	-	0.34	-	-
6	<b>Sb</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.51	-	0.29	-	0.25	-	0.19	-	0.37	-	0.29	-	0.19	-	-
7	<b>Sc</b>	mg/kg	0.1	3.4	11	3.6	11	3.4	6	3.2	8	3.7	10	3.7	8	4.1	13	12-21
8	<b>Se</b>	mg/kg	0.1	0.9	-	0.7	-	0.7	-	0.5	-	1.1	-	0.7	-	0.5	-	-
9	<b>Si</b>	%	-	-	17.72	-	19.43	-	19.90	-	20.61	-	19.31	-	20.95	-	20.03	14.7-29.3
10	<b>Sn</b>	mg/kg	0.1	3.2	-	1.8	-	1.5	-	1.3	-	1.9	-	1.5	-	0.8	-	-
11	<b>Sr</b>	mg/kg	0.5	353	368	274.4	300	224.8	252	218	265	259.1	281	281.6	291	290.5	310	113-442
12	<b>Th</b>	mg/kg	0.1	3.5	4	4.1	5	3.6	17	3.6	25	4	11	4.2	10	4.7	7	<3-19
13	<b>Ti</b>	%	0.001	0.009	0.308	0.005	0.328	0.006	0.347	0.008	0.349	0.006	0.324	0.010	0.334	0.015	0.336	0.02-0.58
14	<b>Tl</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.26	-	0.17	-	0.21	-	0.19	-	0.27	-	0.2	-	0.14	-	-
15	<b>U</b>	mg/kg	0.1	1.3	-	1.5	-	1.2	-	1.1	-	1.3	-	1.2	-	1.1	-	-
16	<b>V</b>	mg/kg	2	32	85	33	85	30	99	26	94	35	113	33	94	31	76	54-169
17	<b>Y</b>	mg/kg	0.01	10.02	18	9.39	23	9.28	24	8.86	20	9.7	24	9.63	19	10.58	19	18-43
18	<b>Zn</b>	mg/kg	<b>0.1</b>	<b>306.6</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>129.8</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>133.1</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>101.2</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>146.9</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>109.3</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>58.2</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43-124</b>
19	<b>Zr</b>	mg/kg	0.1	1.1	108	1.2	91	1	105	1	124	1.1	86	1.2	92	1.9	106	76-260
20	<b>H<sub>2</sub>O<sup>-</sup></b>	%	-	-	2.7	-	4.0	-	2.8	-	2.4	-	3.7	-	2.7	-	2.1	-
21	<b>OM</b>	%	-	-	2.8	-	1.8	-	2.0	-	1.7	-	3.4	-	2.2	-	1.1	-
22	<b>H<sub>2</sub>O<sup>+</sup></b>	%	-	-	6.0	-	6.5	-	5.4	-	4.4	-	6.5	-	5.8	-	2.3	-
23	<b>CO<sub>2</sub></b>	%	-	-	11.6	-	8.9	-	9.1	-	9.3	-	8.6	-	7.4	-	12.3	-
24	<b>LOI</b>	%	-	-	23.1	-	21.2	-	19.3	-	17.8	-	22.3	-	18.1	-	17.8	4.8-29.3

As regards the Aqua Regia extraction, data showed the presence of elements seldom analysed in sediments of the area. The most striking features are the differences observed between S1 and all the other sites for a number of elements, in particular Ag, As, Au, Bi, Cd, Cr, Cu, Hg, Pb, Pd, Pt, Re, Zn (Table 1). According to Donnini et al. (2007), S7 should be considered as unpolluted site and if its results are taken as reference, a strong enrichment is clear for several elements (Fig. 2). Mercury, which is a well-known pollutant in the area (Miserocchi et al., 1993; Fabbri et al., 1998; Fabbri et al., 2001a, b; Trombini et al., 2003; Matteucci et al., 2005; Guerra et al., 2007; Covelli et al., 2011; Guerra, 2012; Dominik et al., 2014; Borghesi et al., 2016), is the element with the largest enrichment (up to 250 times compared to S7) and reaches relatively high concentrations in the Magni Channel site (S1, up to 25 mg/kg). Mercury dynamics in the lagoon is complex and although the maxima in concentrations are not at the surface, the element is heavily mobilized at the water/sediment interface in the southern part of the lagoon (Covelli et al., 2011). Borghesi et al. (2016) highlighted similar behaviour among Hg and Ag, Au, Cd, Cu and Zn for six different coastal lagoons in the same Region due to metal affinity for the fine fraction of the sediment.

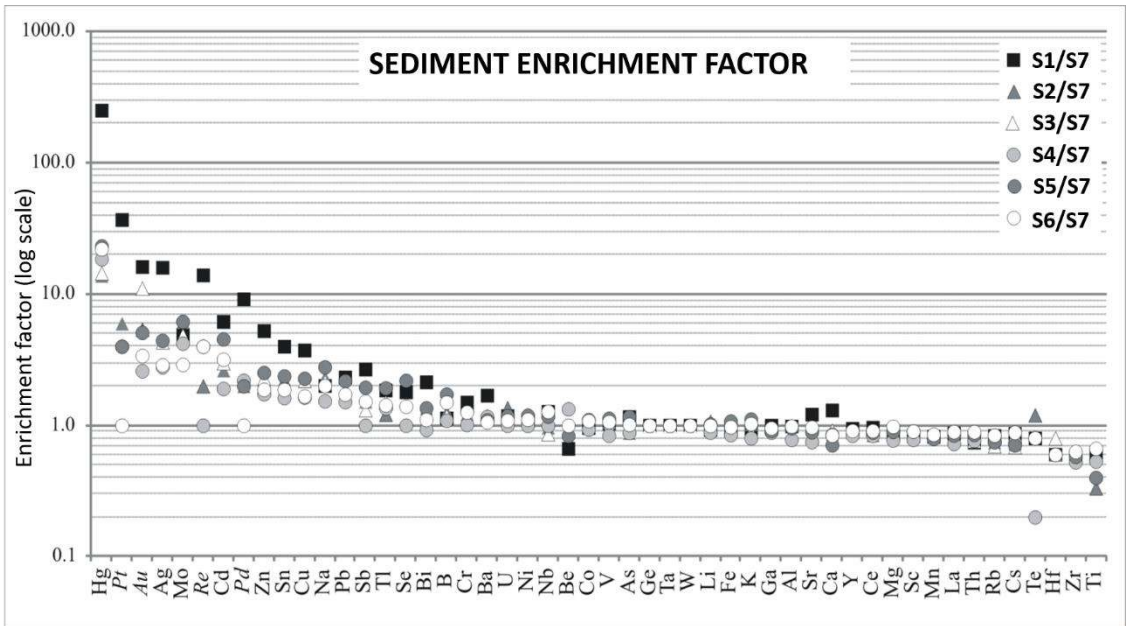
Notable enrichments are then evident in Figure 2 for valuable metals like Pt, Au, Ag, Re and Pd, which showed substantial increase (up to 10-fold) compared to S7 and to median values reported by Cicchella et al. (2015), that represent a useful reference for metal concentrations in mineral matrix obtained with the same analytical technique and at the same laboratory. In particular, Platinum and Palladium are of recent technogenic use and their anthropogenic fluxes greatly exceed the natural ones (Ruchter and Surer, 2015; McGillicuddy et al., 2017). Platinum and Palladium are largely used in automobile catalytic converters (Bossi and Gediga, 2017) and their

367 dispersion increases particularly around urban areas in roadside soils (Ravindra et al., 2004; Ruchter  
368 and Surer, 2015; Leopold et al., 2018; Zuzolo et al., 2018), but also in marine areas close to urban  
369 settings (Cobelo-García et al., 2011; Abdou et al., 2016).

370 The Silver concentration reaches a peak at S1 with 0.99 mg/kg, at least four times more than  
371 the other sites in the Pialassa Baiona and ten times more than other coastal lagoons in the same  
372 Region as resulted by Borghesi et al. (2016). The Ag enrichment is controlled by many factors such  
373 as pH, OM, as well as the source material. At typical environmental pH values, Ag is adsorbed onto  
374 Fe hydroxides, in preference to Cu and Zn (Lottermoser et al., 1999). In the near Venice lagoon,  
375 Giusti and Zang (2002) measured Ag sediment concentrations 5-6 fold higher than this study,  
376 justifying the abundance with both famous glassmaking firms in Murano island and the large volume  
377 of untreated sewage sludges discharged into the lagoon from the nearby Marghera industrial area.

378 Moderate enrichments (four times compared to S7) are shown by Mo, Cd, Zn, Sn and Cu that  
379 can be more directly linked to industrial effluents as reported by Giusti and Zang (2002) in Venice  
380 lagoon and Borghesi et al. (2016) for the same Region. Enrichments in all these elements also  
381 characterize the other sites, although at an order of magnitude lower than S1 (around 2 times).  
382 Many of the metals detected in sediments show a decreasing concentration with increasing distance  
383 from the industrial area located in the southern part of the lagoon. This suggests that industrial  
384 discharge effluents play a major role in the lagoon contamination compared to effluents from urban  
385 and agricultural activities. In facts, the distribution of some elements, including Zn, Cr, Cu, Mo, Ag,  
386 and Hg, follow trends similar to those reported for other organic pollutants of industrial origin in  
387 the same area (Vassura et al., 2005; Fabbri et al., 2006). Vassura et al. (2005), for instance, detected  
388 a clear South-North increasing pattern of prioritized PAHs, with sediments from the Magni channel  
389 area (the present S1) showing concentrations of pyrene, fluoranthene, anthracene and  
390 phenanthrene up to 10,000 times higher compared to the northern sites.

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**Figure 2. Metal enrichment in sediments from selected sites within the Pialassa Baiona lagoon.** Data are normalized on Site 7 (S7), which was selected as internal reference based on previous literature (Trombini et al., 2003; Fabbri et al., 2006; Donnini et al., 2007; Franzellitti et al., 2010). Elements in italics (*Pt, Au, Re, Pd*) were not investigated in the mussel tissues.

### 3.3 Metal bioaccumulation

Results of the chemical analyses on mussel tissues are presented in Table 2. Data were obtained for all sites except S1, which was characterized by a high mortality rate (more details in section 3.4). T0 data, originating from mussels growing in the Adriatic Sea, are in line with basal level for As, Ba, Cd, Cr, Cu, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Se, V, Zn identified by Fattorini et al. (2008). The trend of concentrations of trace elements in soft tissue of *Mytilus galloprovincialis* belonging to T0 is (Zn, Fe) > (As, Mn, Cu, Ni, Pb) > (Cd, Cr, Ag) > (Hg, Sb). The trend is confirmed also for average trace elements concentration among all sites: (Fe, Zn) > (As, Mn, Cu) > (Pb, Ag, Ni, Cd, Cr, Hg) > Sb. The only notable change is the Ag enrichment from 0.12 mg/kg in T0 tissues to a mean concentration of 0.80 mg/kg in tissues from experimental sites. Although Cd, Hg, Sb were not included, the same abundance trend was found by Giusti and Zang (2002) in the Venice Lagoon: Fe > Zn > (Cu, Mn, As) > Ag > Pb > (Ni, Cr). Absolute concentrations of Zn, Cu, Pb and Cd found in this study (Table 2) fall in the lowest part of the ranges summarized by Benali et al. (2017) for 10 locations in Mediterranean Sea.

**Table 2. Results of the chemical analyses on mussel tissues (bioaccumulation). Data refers to T0 and to the 5 sites where mussels survived or remained after the exposure period.**

	unit	T0	S2	S3	S5	S6	S7
Ag	mg/kg	0.12	0.99	0.98	1.21	0.62	0.82
Al	mg/kg	36	39	56	98	82	47
As	mg/kg	9.83	12.8	9.98	11.9	12.4	11.4
B	mg/kg	25.7	22.9	19.7	22.8	25.9	19.4

	Ba	mg/kg	1.95	0.35	0.49	0.54	0.52	0.36
1	Be	mg/kg	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.006	0.004
2	Bi	mg/kg	0.057	0.009	0.009	0.007	0.011	0.008
3	Ca	mg/kg	2004	1322	1299	1726	1679	1157
4	Cd	mg/kg	0.70	0.71	0.78	0.76	0.77	0.50
5	Ce	mg/kg	0.118	0.051	0.092	0.124	0.166	0.075
6	Co	mg/kg	0.54	0.323	0.3	0.303	0.511	0.315
7	Cr	mg/kg	0.57	0.6	0.53	0.67	0.53	0.64
8	Cs	mg/kg	0.022	0.014	0.016	0.022	0.019	0.015
9	Cu	mg/kg	4.65	2.71	2.63	2.81	2.66	1.46
10	Fe	mg/kg	67.5	68.1	77.4	116.0	103.4	91.7
11	Ga	mg/kg	0.018	0.007	0.011	0.019	0.013	0.009
12	Hg	mg/kg	0.082	0.35	0.32	0.41	0.27	0.16
13	K	mg/kg	11084	10988	9729	11129	11244	9535
14	La	mg/kg	0.138	0.035	0.057	0.074	0.109	0.06
15	Li	mg/kg	0.88	0.46	0.41	0.51	0.58	0.34
16	Mg	mg/kg	4198	3851	3467	3676	4422	2506
17	Mn	mg/kg	4.84	5.19	7.50	8.16	8.03	5.03
18	Mo	mg/kg	0.645	0.353	0.368	0.317	0.394	0.274
19	Na	mg/kg	22885	20201	15986	19714	24751	13438
20	Nb	mg/kg	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.003	0.002
21	Ni	mg/kg	3.61	0.72	0.69	0.73	0.92	0.64
22	Pb	mg/kg	1.41	0.87	0.52	0.57	0.94	0.64
23	Rb	mg/kg	5.29	4.08	4.32	4.27	4.3	3.78
24	Sb	mg/kg	0.018	0.038	0.031	0.03	0.048	0.039
25	Sc	mg/kg	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.04
26	Se	mg/kg	2.27	2.10	2.10	2.01	1.83	1.52
27	Sn	mg/kg	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.10	0.09	0.08
28	Sr	mg/kg	31.2	17.7	16.5	20.6	22.8	14.3
29	Th	mg/kg	0.019	0.011	0.014	0.025	0.031	0.016
30	Ti	mg/kg	0.49	0.34	0.62	1.07	0.88	0.50
31	Tl	mg/kg	0.003	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.001
32	U	mg/kg	0.127	0.049	0.040	0.054	0.065	0.032
33	V	mg/kg	1.15	0.44	0.49	0.55	0.80	0.47
34	Y	mg/kg	0.080	0.046	0.071	0.085	0.094	0.04
35	Zn	mg/kg	107.1	116	62.4	95.6	134	86.9
36	Zr	mg/kg	0.064	0.013	0.025	0.025	0.021	0.018

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The bioaccumulation factor is graphically showed in Figure 3. Enrichments are notable for Ag, Hg and Sb in all the sites, with higher bioaccumulation at S5 located in the centre of the lagoon in a pond close to the outlet of a canal from the southern part of the lagoon, the most contaminated one. Although not high as those measured in mussels from other sites such as Northern England (Giusti et al., 1999), these three elements could be the most critical since other elements known for toxicity to mussels (e.g. Cd, Pb, Ni) (Benali et al. 2017; Yigit et al. 2017) are similar or depleted compared to T0 (Fig. 3).

The enrichment in mercury was relatively high, as expected and already verified both in living clams (Trombini et al., 2003) and mussels (Fabbri et al., 2006; Donnini et al., 2007). Moreover, the Hg cycling at the sediment-water interface (Covelli et al., 2011), could be a reason for the mercury enrichment observed in all sediment samples and may also reflect the high Hg concentrations observed in mussels exposed at S5 (Fig. 3).

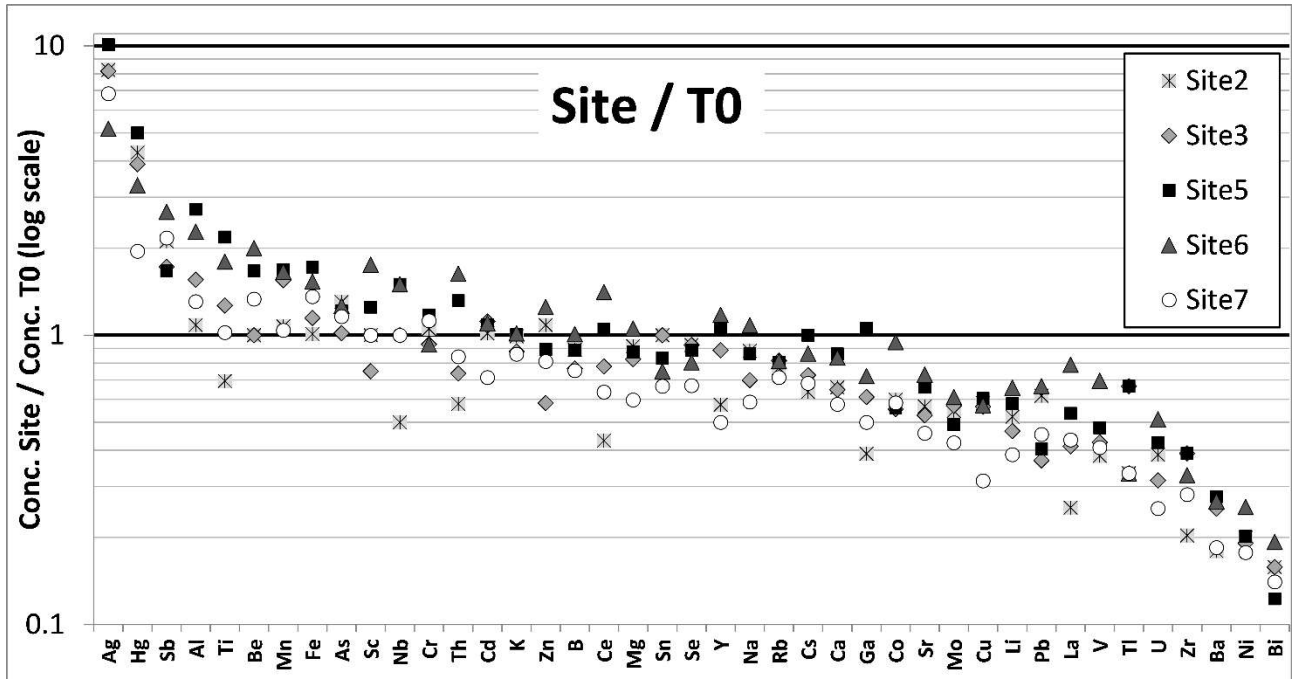


428 Silver has recently attracted much interest since its increasing application as bactericidal and  
429 usage in numerous consumer products lead to contamination of aquatic ecosystems, often in form  
430 of Ag nanoparticles (Yuan et al., 2018; Outa et al., 2020). Silver speciation in environment is  
431 dependent by local environmental conditions and usually forms stable complexes with Lewis bases  
432 such as amines, halides, and thiolates and with dissolved organic matter altering its toxicity  
433 (Mousavi et al., 2015). In Pialassa Baiona, Greggio et al. (2020) showed dissolved concentrations  
434 ranging from 0.02 to 10 µg/L, with higher concentrations in basins with drainage water input.  
435 Concerning bioaccumulation, recent works reported the effect of Ag nanoparticles on soft tissues  
436 of mussels. *Mytilus galloprovincialis* accumulated Ag in digestive gland tubule cells and gills during  
437 the entire year (Duroudier et al., 2019) and intralysosomal metal accumulation and lysosomal  
438 membrane destabilisation were observed (Jimeno-Romero et al., 2017). Compare to this study (max  
439 1.21 mg/kg dry wt), Giusti and Zang (2002) in Venice lagoon found silver concentrations up to 6.2  
440 mg/kg dry wt that are aligned with outcomes in other species of the genus *Mytilus* as reported by  
441 Martin et al. (1988).

442 Antimony is pervasive in synthetic polymers (including textiles, plastics and rubbers) (Filella et  
443 al., 2019) and it is widely applied in alloy industries as flame retardant, as pigments for colour or  
444 colour protection (Filella et al., 2002; James and Turner 2020). Although rock weathering and soil  
445 runoff supply Sb to the environment, anthropogenic source is crucial. James and Turner (2020)  
446 demonstrated that Sb could also be mobilised via digestion and bioturbation by deposit-feeders in  
447 sediment contaminated by plastic or directly adsorbed from microplastics taken up by mussels (Van  
448 Cauwenberghe et al., 2015). Antimony concentrations in unpolluted waters are less than 1 µg/L  
449 (Filella et al., 2002). Greggio et al. (2020) reported Sb water concentrations in western ponds of the  
450 Pialassa Baiona ranging from 0.05 to 0.5 µg/L. Limited is the knowledge of Antimony concentration  
451 in mussels. In this study Sb in mussel tissues ranged from 0.01 to 0.05 mg/kg (Table 2) with a 2-3 as  
452 enrichment factor (Fig. 3). De Gregori et al. (2007) found tissue concentration ranging from 0.007 to  
453 0.06 mg/kg in unpolluted area, while 0.23 to 1.030 mg/kg in harbour dock protected by antimony-  
454 lead alloy cover. Garcia (2015) measured Sb concentration ranging from 0.003 to 0.023 mg/kg in the  
455 tissues of *Corbicula fluminea* collected in a river affected by a decommissioned Antimony smelter.

456 It is worth noting the depletion relative to T0 of elements like Cu, Pb and Ni, (Fig. 3 and Table  
457 2). This might suggest that these elements are not strongly mobilized in the lagoon environment,  
458 although slight differences can be recognized between S7 and the other sites. This is in contrast with  
459 results by Pignotti et al. (2018) that using sequential extraction, defined Cu and Pb as the most

460 mobile elements in sediments (~70 % and ~80 %, of the total, respectively) in the neighbouring  
 461 Pialassa Piomboni. In agreement with Pignotti et al. (2018) is the Ni behaviour here characterised  
 462 by low mobility and predominantly bound to the residual fraction of the sediment, suggesting a  
 463 lithogenic origin.



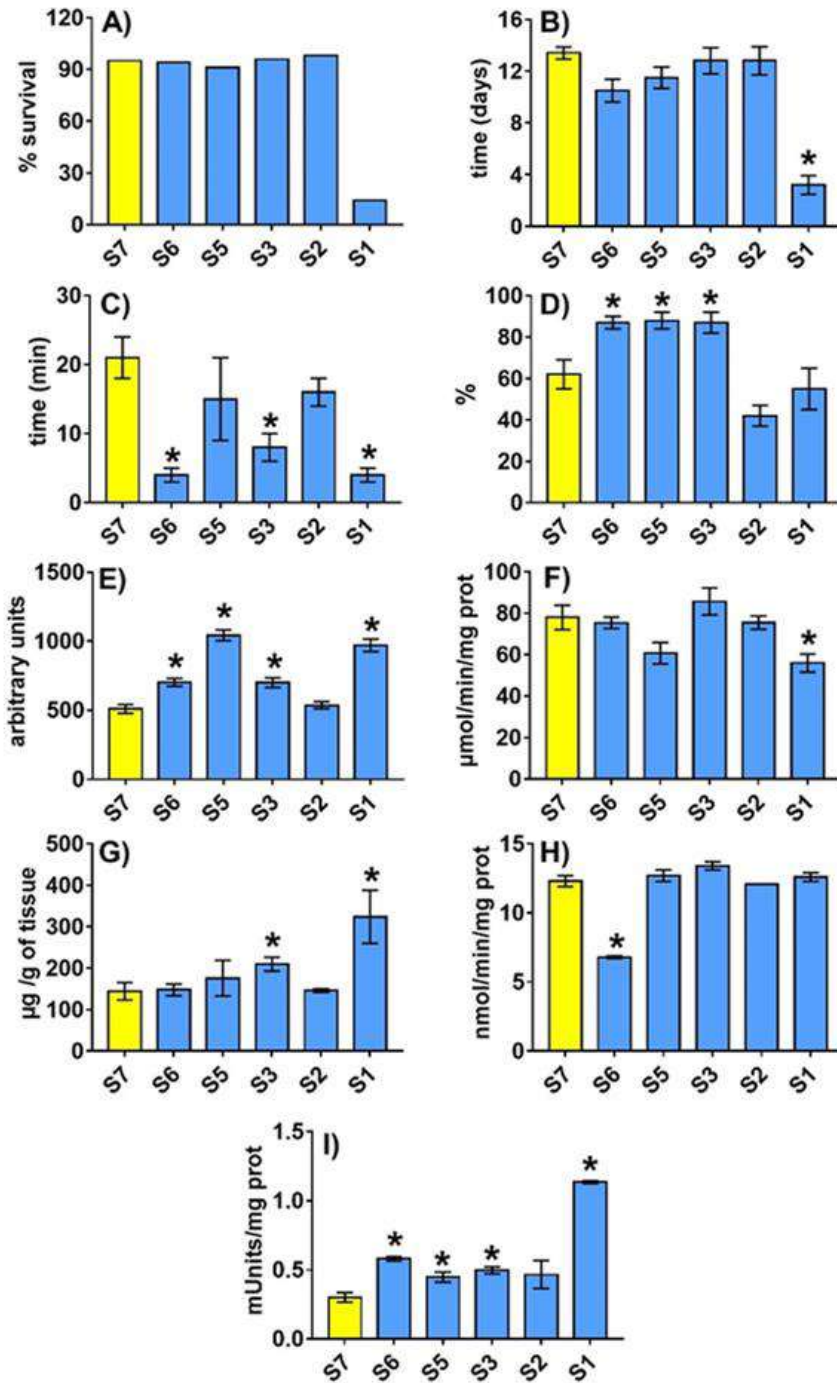
365 **Figure 3. Bioaccumulation factor of metals in mussel tissues.** The analysis has been performed on the tissue of mussels  
 366 deployed for 30 days into different sites of the Pialassa Baiona lagoon compared to mussels analysed before the *in situ*  
 367 deployment (T0). Elements are ranked according to average enrichment.

### 471 3.4 Biological effects on mussels

472 The mussel 30-day exposure within the Pialassa Baiona lagoon resulted in significant  
 473 alterations of biological endpoints measured at different levels of the hierarchical ladder (from cell  
 474 to organism) (Fig. 4). Among the investigated sites, adverse conditions for the mussel survival were  
 475 observed in S1, with about 80 % mortality *versus* 10 % recorded elsewhere (Fig. 4A). Different from  
 476 S2 – S7, survival (and biomarker) data were measured in S1 after just three days of exposure, in line  
 477 with previous observations on mussels transplanted in the same area (Franzellitti et al., 2010). The  
 478 short time spent *in situ* within S1 was not such to allow mussels to bioaccumulate metals at levels  
 479 considered environmentally realistic, for which  $\geq 28$  days are usually required (Viarengo et al.,  
 480 2007a); thus, data of metal bioaccumulation are missing for this site. Sediment concentrations of  
 481 Hg, Cr, Zn, Cu and Ba, known for their toxicity on marine mussels (De Los Ríos et al., 2013) were

482 negatively and significantly correlated with mussel survival (Fig. 5). Relationships were also detected  
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483 between survival and average salinity and temperature, which showed minima and maxima in S1,  
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484 respectively (Table S3). Both parameters are known to be responsible for the mussel physiological  
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485 fitness and to influence their response to toxicants synergistically (Fabbri and Dinelli, 2014;  
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486 DeCourten and Brander, 2017). It is thus plausible that physico-chemical conditions of both natural  
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487 and anthropogenic nature simultaneously influenced the survival of mussels across the lagoon.  
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12 Data of *in situ* survival follow trends similar to those from the SOS test, which showed  
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1489 significant reduction of survival functions in mussels from S1 (Fig. 4B). SOS is measured as the  
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1490 survival of mussels in dry conditions, which is an event regularly experienced by intertidal organisms  
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17 due to tidal fluctuations. The SOS data display significant and negative correlation with a suite of  
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19 metals measured in both sediments and mussel tissues, including Ba, Bi, Cu, Sr and Zn, among others  
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21 (Fig. 5). These findings are in line with previous evidence obtained in *M. galloprovincialis*, which  
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23 showed significant SOS decrease after 3 to 7 days of exposure to trace levels of Cu and Zn-based  
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25 antifouling agents (Viarengo et al., 1995; Marcheselli et al., 2011). Further elements showing  
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27 marked enrichment in S1 sediments, as Cd (0.68 mg/kg) and Hg (25.7 µg/kg), were significantly  
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29 correlated with SOS (Fig. 4). SOS and survival data were found to be significantly and positively  
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31 correlated to each other and showed positive and negative correlation with electrical conductivity  
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33 and temperature, respectively (Table S3). This indicates that higher temperatures and salinity  
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35 measured at S1 throughout the exposure period may have cumulatively increased the impact of  
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37 metals on the mussel vital functions. Although it is acknowledged that SOS sensitivity is lower than  
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39 other sub-lethal and general stress biomarkers (Viarengo et al., 2007a), data from this study  
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41 highlight its suitability to detect causal relationships between metal contamination/bioavailability  
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43 and adverse effects on mussels at the “organism” level.  
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**Figure 4. Biomarker modulation in mussels transplanted into the Pialassa Baiona lagoon.** Data from all sites (mean  $\pm$  SEM) have been measured in mussels collected after 30 days of exposure, except for S1, referred to mussels collected after 3 days of exposure due to high mortality. A, survival (SURV); B, Stress on stress (SOS); C, lysosomal membrane stability (LMS); D, lysosome to cytoplasm volume ratio (LYS/CYT); E, lipofuscin (LIF), F, catalase activity (CAT); G, metallothionein content (MT); H, acetylcholinesterase activity (ACHE); I, peroxisomal acyl-CoA oxidase (AOX). Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences compared to the control site S7 (One-Way ANOVA, Duncan's post-hoc test).

LMS is the most sensitive biomarker of general stress in bivalves and previous studies highlighted strict relationships between the xenobiotic-driven decrease of this parameter in *Mytilus*

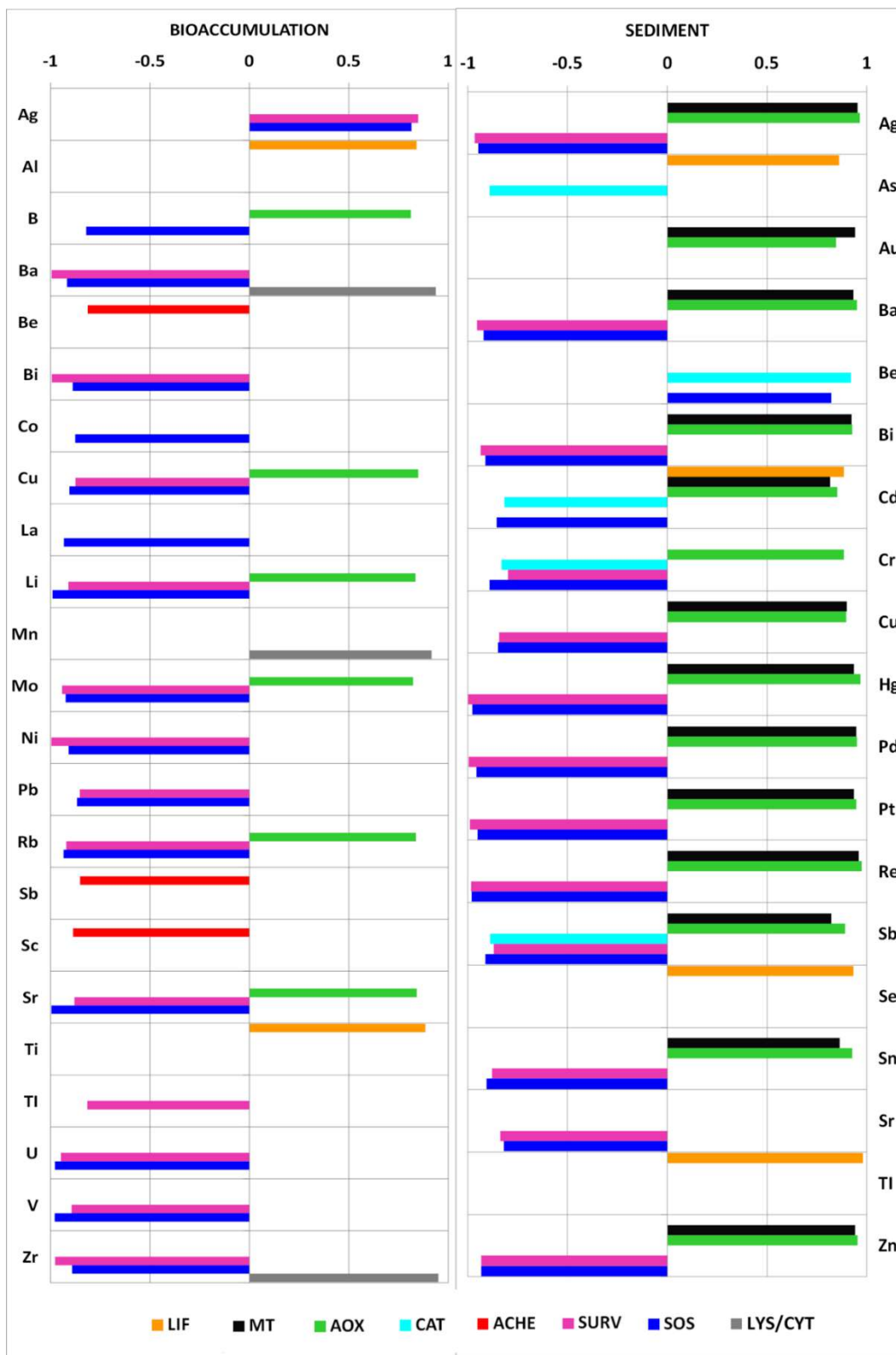
515 spp. and alterations to higher functions, such as growth and/or reproduction (Moore et al., 2006;  
516 Martinez-Gomez et al., 2008). Data reported in Figure 4C indicate a significant LMS reduction in  
517 digestive glands from mussels collected at S1 (3-day exposure), S3 and S6 (30-day exposure)  
518 compared to control mussels from S7. Interestingly, none of the measured metals, physico-chemical  
519 factors and/or biological endpoints was correlated with trends of LMS in exposed mussels (Fig. 5,  
520 Table S3). Although positive relationships between (dissolved) metal exposure and LMS have been  
521 reported in mussels under laboratory conditions (Viarengo et al., 1997), no correlation has been  
522 highlighted following 28 days of *in situ* exposure into a nearby lagoon (i.e. Pialassa Piomboni,  
523 Ravenna, Italy; Capolupo et al., 2017).

524 The mussel exposure to contaminated environment is frequently associated to an augmented  
525 permeability of the lysosomal membrane and an overall lysosomal swelling. In the present study,  
526 mussels deployed into S3, S5 and S6 showed a significantly higher LYS/CYT compared to the control  
527 site S7 (Fig. 4D), following trends significantly correlated to tissue levels of Ba, Mn and Zr (Fig. 5).  
528 The S3 and S5 were located in proximity of streams ensuring the flowing of industrial wastewater  
529 from southern and eastern settlements to the Adriatic Sea, while S6 was located along a channel  
530 that receive water from Lamone river after having crossed the natural areas located to the west (Fig.  
531 1); thus, these data outline the need for a better understanding of the spatial/temporal relationships  
532 between different source of lagoon water (industrial and continental), metal release into the  
533 environment and lysosomal dysfunction in the exposed biota.

534 Lysosomal biomarker of general stress, as LMS and LYS/CYT, describe the overall health status  
535 of tested organisms and may thus be modulated by a wide range of natural/anthropogenic stressors;  
536 therefore, considering the diverse array of human activities directly and indirectly linked to the  
537 Pialassa Baiona lagoon, it cannot be ruled out that further organic pollutants may have played a role  
538 in observed lysosomal responses.

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**Figure 5. Correlation between biological data and metal concentrations.** Pearson's coefficients calculated between biological data and levels of metals measured in mussel tissues (bioaccumulation) and sediment. Only coefficients showing a significant correlation ( $p < 0.05$ ) are reported in the figure.

546 Mussels from all sites, except S2, showed a significant accumulation of LIF compared to those  
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547 deployed into the reference site (S7) (Fig. 4E). LIF represent the ultimate products of the lipid  
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548 peroxidation of biological membranes; they are composed by oxidatively modified proteins, lipid  
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549 degradation by-products, carbohydrates and metals, and appear as granules within lysosomes of  
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550 cells composing the digestive tubules epithelium (Moore et al., 2008). Previous biomonitoring  
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551 studies highlighted clear relationships between LIF accumulation in mussels, the metal uptake and  
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552 the metal spatial/temporal distribution into enclosed marine systems as bays and lagoons  
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553 (Moschino et al., 2011; Capolupo et al., 2017). Accordingly, we identified significant and positive  
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554 correlations between LIF, Al and Ti tissue content in mussels, as well as with As, Cd, Se and TI  
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555 measured in sediments (Fig. 5). In addition, a significant and negative correlation has been observed  
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556 between LIF and the activity of the antioxidant enzyme CAT (Table S3). The latter showed a  
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557 significant decrease *versus* control (S7) in mussels exposed at S1 (Fig. 4F), suggesting that beside  
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558 ROS formation, the exposure to relatively high metal concentrations might also down-regulate the  
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559 overall mussel antioxidant defences. CAT also showed negative correlation with elements previously  
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560 found to elicit pro-oxidant effects in mussels, as As, Cd, Cr, Sb (Franzellitti et al., 2012; Benali et al.,  
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561 2017; Coppola et al., 2018), and with temperature trends within the lagoon. This indicates that both  
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562 chemical and physical factors might have cumulatively influenced the mussel ROS scavenging  
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563 activity over the exposure within the lagoon.  
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35 MT have been used as biomarker of exposure in this study owing to their high heavy-metal-  
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37 binding capacity (Lavradas et al., 2016). Compared to control site S7, a significant MT synthesis  
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39 induction has been recorded in the digestive gland of mussels from S3 and S1 (Fig. 4H), both located  
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41 in the southern part of the lagoon in proximity of a large industrial complex (Fig.1). MT trends  
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43 showed a positive and significant correlation with the sediment concentration of metals known as  
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45 MT up-regulator, including Cd, Cu, Zn, Pd, Pt, Sn and Hg (Viarengo et al., 2001; Rocha et al., 2016;  
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47 Zimmermann and Sures, 2018), and other less studied such as Ag, Au, Ba, Bi, Re, and Sb (Fig. 5).  
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49 Positive relationships were detected MT trends and fluctuations of temperature and conductivity  
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51 (Table S3), indicating that physico-chemical factors may interactively modulate MT in mussels from  
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53 contaminated areas.  
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55 The activity of the enzyme AChE, which mediates the termination of the nervous impulses  
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57 driven by the neurotransmitter acetylcholine, was significantly inhibited in mussels from the  
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59 northern site S6 (Fig. 4H). AChE is typically inhibited by pesticides, although in mussels it may also  
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61 be inhibited by high levels of metals (Lionetto et al., 2003). Apart from a negative relationship with  
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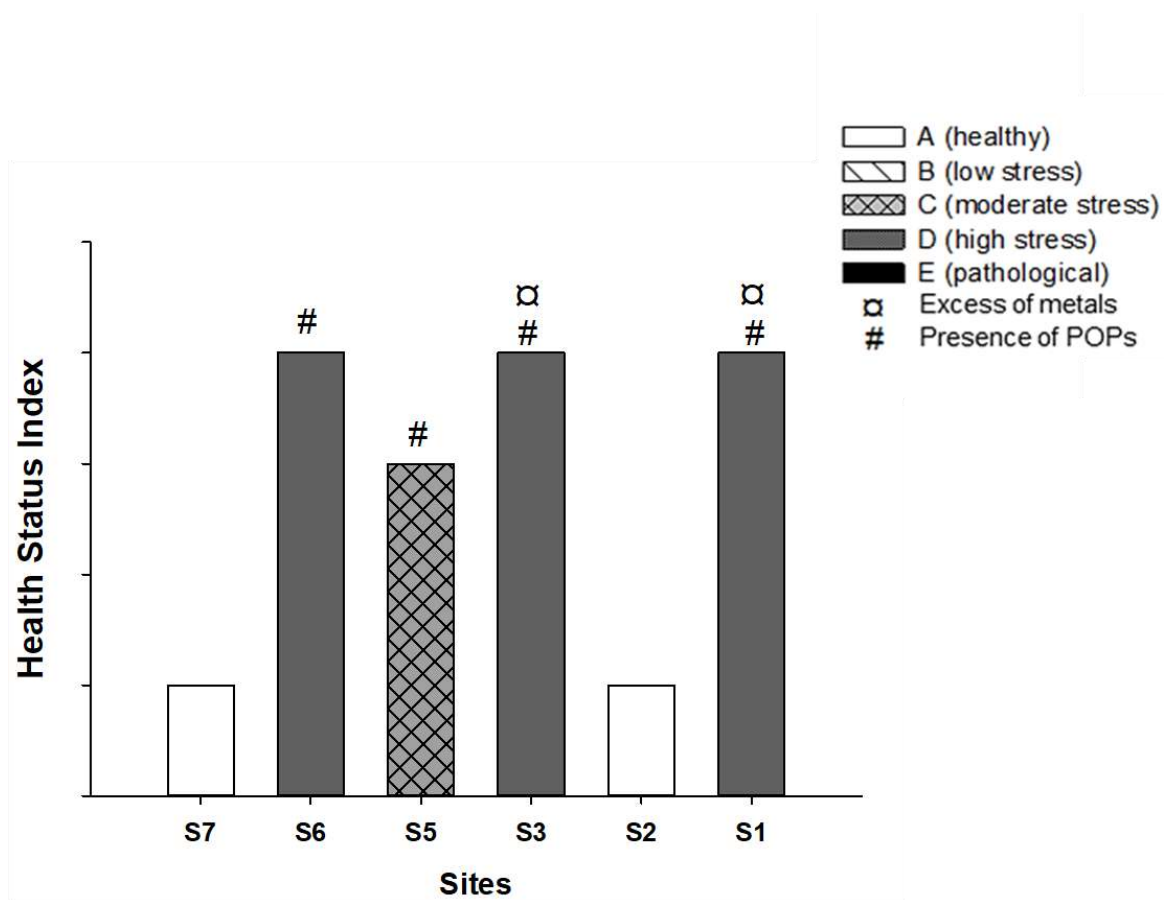
578 Be, AChE trends did not show significant relationships with metals measured in sediments and  
579 mussel tissues (Fig. 5), nor with other biological endpoints measured in deployed mussels (Table  
580 S3). Compared to the S7, sediments collected in S6 showed a 20 times higher enrichment of Hg (Fig.  
581 2), which is known as a potent AChE inhibitor in mussels, notably when co-exposed to fluctuations  
582 of other physico-chemical parameters, such as temperature (Coppola et al., 2017).

583 The possible impact of organic xenobiotics on the physiology of transplanted mussels has been  
584 screened through the analysis of the Acyl-Co A oxidase (AOX) activity. *In situ* deployed mussels  
585 showed a significant AOX increase following exposure at all sites except S2 (Fig. 4I). These data  
586 corroborate previous evidence of a diffuse PAH contamination (notably pyrene, fluoranthene and  
587 anthracene) in sediment and mussels collected from the same area (Vassura et al., 2005; Fabbri et  
588 al., 2006). Vassura et al. (2005) also found clear relationships between patterns of PAHs and Hg in  
589 the lagoon sediments. Accordingly, many metals herein measured in sediments, including among  
590 others Ag, Ba; Hg, Cu, Cr, Cd and Zn, as well as mussel tissues concentrations of B, Cu, Li, Mo and Sr  
591 showed positive correlation with AOX (Fig. 5), suggesting a possible metal-induced peroxisome  
592 proliferation and a similar spatial distribution of metals and POPs within the lagoon.

593 The output produced by biomarkers data integration performed through the MES is reported  
594 in Figure 6. The LMS was chosen as guide parameter for the data integration. A good health status  
595 (HSI = A) was assigned by the Expert System to mussels *in situ* exposed at the reference site S7 and  
596 at S2. This output confirms the good environmental quality of the lagoon north-eastern area, as  
597 previously identified based on chemical and biological evidence (Franzellitti et al., 2010), and is in  
598 line with the lack of biomarker alterations observed in mussels from S2. Although this site is located  
599 in the southern part of the lagoon, i.e. in proximity of industrial settlements, it is directly exposed  
600 to the marine water entering the lagoon indicating the relevance of high water circulation and  
601 oxygenation to the fitness of the resilient biota. A moderate stress level (HSI = C) was assigned to  
602 mussels exposed at S5, while mussels from S1, S3 and S6 were classified as heavily stressed (HSI =  
603 D) (Fig. 6). In line with the metal contamination/bioaccumulation and coherently with MT levels  
604 measured in mussels, an excess of metal contamination was identified in S1 and S3. Moreover, the  
605 MES associated the health status alterations of mussels exposed at S1, S3, S5 and S6 to the presence  
606 of persistent organic compounds (POPs), in line with measured AOX trends. Although organics were  
607 not included in the analytical design of this study, this output is consistent with previous evidence  
608 of PCB and PAH contamination across the lagoon (Vassura et al., 2005; Fabbri et al., 2006; Guerra,



609 2012) and may confirm the co-occurrence of multiple stressors in different areas of the Pialassa  
 610 Baiona lagoon



611 **Figure 6. Biomarker data integration.** A unique Health status index (HSI) has been generated using the Mussel Expert  
 612 System (MES, developed by Dagnino et al., 2007) based on biomarker alterations observed at each site. The LMS was  
 613 chosen as guide parameter for the HSI assessment.  
 614

#### 617 4 Conclusions

618 The integrated approach implemented in this study provided accurate and reliable clues on  
 619 the distribution of metals in the Pialassa Baiona lagoon, their bioavailability for exposed mussels  
 620 and their effects on key biological functions, posing also attention to seldom considered elements  
 621 such as Ag and Sb.

622 The physico-chemical data revealed clear differences among S1 and other investigated sites.  
 623 The water in Magni Channel (S1) showed higher column temperature, reduced EC and a lower pH  
 624 value, for the entire monitoring period generating local conditions aligned with the worst forecasted  
 625 climate change scenarios.

626 The geochemical analysis of total elements indicated that sediments in Pialassa Baiona are a  
627 mixture of carbonate and silicates with variable amount of organic matter. The total concentrations  
628 of the investigated elements are within the range of regional background. Exception is made for Zn  
629 and Cu, and Pb respectively double (in S1) and slightly above (S3 and S5) the local natural  
630 background values.

631 The aqua regia digestion identified a south-north decreasing contamination trend, with  
632 highest enrichments of Hg, Pt, Au, Ag, Mo, Re, Cd, Pd, Zn; Sn, and Cu (in enrichment order, Fig. 2)  
633 being at least two folds enriched than S7 (internal control). Moreover, the most affected sites are  
634 in the south-western areas, which consistently receives wastewater effluents from a near  
635 petrochemical settlement (south) and drainage water from the inland (west).

636 Bioaccumulation analysis performed in transplanted mussels proved suitable to evaluate the  
637 bioavailability of metals in relation to their distribution across the lagoon. Integrating physical,  
638 chemical and biological measures allowed for defining causal relationships between observed  
639 mortality rates, lysosomal dysfunctions, oxidative stress induction, biomarker of exposure  
640 modulations and the metal distribution within the lagoon. Besides this, the different channels  
641 examined within the lagoon proved to be an excellent study system for evaluating climate change  
642 effects (i.e. modified temperature, pH, and salinity) combined with pollution. In addition, the use of  
643 the MES proved suitable to identify the impact induced by specific substances on the overall mussel  
644 fitness and to estimate the toxicological pathways occurring in highly pressure lagoons.

645 Overall, data from this study assign a general scarce environmental quality to the Pialassa  
646 Baiona lagoon; considering the heterogeneity of this area in terms of geological, physico-chemical  
647 and anthropogenic factors, regular biomonitoring surveys should be performed to control the onset  
648 of conditions which might exacerbate the impact of metals and other pollutants, notably on a  
649 seasonal timeframe. In this respect, the integrated strategy undertaken in this investigation  
650 represents a promising approach for the biomonitoring of this area and, more generally, for reliably  
651 assessing the environmental quality of highly pressured lagoons.

53 **Acknowledgement**

654 The Authors are grateful to Municipality of Ravenna for supporting the work and allowing field  
655 activity within the Piailassa Baiona lagoon. Furthermore, the Authors thank the anonymous  
656 Reviewers who helped in improving the quality of the article.

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# Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring

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## Abstract:

Coastal lagoons are complex environments threatened by natural and anthropogenic stressors. Here, we tested the effectiveness of combining physical, geochemical and chemical measurements with biomarker data obtained in field-exposed marine mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) as a biomonitoring strategy for a highly pressured lagoon (Pialassa Baiona, Ravenna, Italy). Data showed a spatial trend of sediment contamination by Hg, Pt, Au, Ag, Mo, Re, Cd, Pd and Zn. Local conditions of high water temperature/low conductivity were detected among selected sites. After a 30-day in situ exposure, Ag and Hg were the most bioaccumulated elements (10 and 5 folds, respectively) in mussels followed by Sb, Al, Ti and Fe. Decreased survival, lysosomal dysfunctions, increased metallothionein content and peroxisome proliferation were observed in mussels in relation to metal spatial distribution and physico-chemical fluctuations. Overall, this study provides a further confirmation of the role of biomonitoring to reliably assess the environmental quality of highly pressured lagoons.

**Keywords:** Coastal lagoon; Sediment geochemistry; Metal bioaccumulation; Biomarkers; Biomonitoring;

## Funding sources

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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## 1 Introduction

Being at the boundary between terrestrial and marine ecosystems coastal lagoons are, by definition, unstable and complex systems morphologically dependent and shaped by natural continental evolution (rivers sediment transport and discharge), sea level variations, coastal dynamics, storminess and local geologic processes (e.g. subsidence) (Bird, 1994; Newton et al., 2014). In natural conditions, coastal lagoons receive fresh and nutrient-rich inputs from the land-side, that combined with shallow, warm and relatively stable water, sustain a complex food chain (from algae, to macro benthos, fish and swamps birds), providing a multitude of life-supporting (Aliaume et al., 2007; Dominik et al., 2014; Petry et al., 2016).

The naturally complicated equilibrium of these environments has often been impacted by strong anthropic development in the last century, especially in those lagoons close to major cities and harbours. With the beginning of demographic boom and of the correlated industrial development, lagoons have been converted into commercial ports or industrial areas and in the worst case as processing water disposal sites (Guerra, 2012; Guerra et al., 2014).

Water and sediment geochemistry of lagoon environments have been widely explored in order to define water status (Mollema et al., 2013; Greggio et al., 2020), sediment provenance and local background concentrations (Migani et al., 2015; Borghesi et al., 2016; Greggio et al., 2018a) or levels of occurring pollutants, notably heavy metals (Nazneen et al., 2019; Saidi et al., 2019), organic compounds (León et al., 2017; Mattes et al., 2018) and emerging contaminants (Pignotti et al., 2017; Pignotti and Dinelli, 2018).

The geochemical characterization of sediments and water is important, but alone often does not allow for an accurate and reliable evaluation of the environmental status of lagoon ecosystems (Carvalho et al., 2014; Dahms, 2014; Moreno-González et al., 2015). Physico-chemical properties and geological background of lagoons can influence the response of exposed organisms to pollutants, inducing potential interactive effects due to changes in bioavailability and toxicity (Migani et al., 2015; Piggott et al., 2015; Borghesi et al., 2016). Chemical assessments fail in detecting biotransformation products, eventually more toxic than the parental compounds (Buryškova et al., 2006; Braga et al., 2018), and in estimating synergistic/antagonistic effects induced on the fitness of the exposed biota (Lari et al., 2017).

For these considerations, multidisciplinary applications integrating geological/chemical parameters, pollutants bioaccumulation and biological effects may represent a promising approach to assess the environmental status of highly pressured coastal systems.

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8 In the framework of biomonitoring programs of marine areas, particular attention has recently  
9 been addressed to the assessment of biomarkers of environmental stress (Turja et al., 2014;  
10 Capolupo et al., 2017; Mansour et al., 2020). Biomarkers are defined as indices of either exposure  
11 or effect of pollutants induced at biochemical, cellular and physiological level on exposed organisms  
12 (Viarengo et al., 2007a). They have successfully been used in association to bioaccumulation  
13 analyses to characterize “sub-organism” toxicological dynamics occurring in highly contaminated  
14 environments and provide crucial and early-warning information for planning urgent intervention  
15 or following the effects of remediation plans (Donnini et al., 2007; Capolupo et al., 2017). The  
16 simultaneous analysis of a wide set of biomarkers offers accurate information on the sub-lethal  
17 alterations induced by multiple stressors and may allow to correlate observed effects with specific  
18 classes of pollutants (Shaw et al., 2011; Turja et al., 2014). Moreover, biomarkers provide a unique  
19 contribution to determine the synergistic effect of pollutant mixtures, even when single  
20 contaminants occur at low concentrations. Biomarker-based assessments are thus currently  
21 promoted under the current EU legislation for monitoring surveys of marine and transitional  
22 environments (2000/60/EC; 2008/56/EC; Piló et al., 2017).

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29 In the investigated area previous works mainly focused on organic pollutants and mercury in  
30 sediments (Trombini et al 2003; Guerra, 2012; Guerra et al., 2014). The bioaccumulation of PHAs in  
31 mussels (Fabbri et al., 2006) as well as mercury and methylmercury in clams (Trombini et al., 2003)  
32 are the only studies involving living organisms in the area. Inorganic pollutants are poor investigated  
33 in the area and when considered they are limited to the ordinary Cd, Cu, Hg, Ni, Pb and Zn in  
34 sediments (Matteucci et al., 2005; Guerra et al., 2014) without integration with biomarkers. Only a  
35 recent study by Capolupo et al. (2017) included, among others, metals bioaccumulation on mussels  
36 in an adjacent coastal lagoon. Moreover, a recent hydrogeological study reported water physico-  
37 chemical alterations and the abundance of seldom analysed metals (Ag and Sb among others) in  
38 surface drainage water entering in the investigated lagoon (Greggio et al., 2020).

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44 For these reasons, the aim of this work was to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating  
45 water physico-chemical data, sediment geochemistry, metal bioaccumulation and biomarker  
46 measurements as a biomonitoring strategy for highly contaminated coastal lagoons. The study was  
47 conducted in a shallow and brackish basin located along the North-Western coast of the Adriatic  
48 Sea (Pialassa Baiona, Ravenna, Italy). In this area, previous works highlight the presence of organic  
49 pollutants in sediments (Fabbri et al., 2006; Guerra, 2012; Guerra et al., 2014; Trombini et al 2003;  
50 Vassura et al. 2005) and their potential for being bioaccumulated by mussels (Fabbri et al., 2006)

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8 and clams (Vassura et al., 2005). Inorganic pollutants were less investigated and the current  
9 information is limited to few elements, as Cd, Cu, Hg, Ni, Pb and Zn (Matteucci et al., 2005; Trombini  
10 et al., 2003; Guerra et al., 2014). A recent hydrogeological study reported water physico-chemical  
11 alterations and the abundance of seldom analysed metals (Ag and Sb among others) in surface  
12 drainage water flowing into the investigated lagoon (Greggio et al., 2020). Therefore, a wide  
13 spectrum of elements was measured in sediments collected from different sites within the lagoon  
14 and biological parameters were assessed in adult specimens of the Mediterranean mussel *Mytilus*  
15 *galloprovincialis* transplanted into different sites in situ within at the same location the lagoon.  
16 Finally, a battery of biological endpoints was measured in mussels, including and encompassed  
17 lysosomal endpoints responses, oxidative stress parameters and biomarkers of exposure to specific  
18 classes of pollutants.

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## 2 Materials and methods

### 2.1 Study area and sampling sites

The Pialassa Baiona (Fig. 1) is a brackish lagoon located northward the town of Ravenna (Italy), between 44°27'55.5"N and 44°31'31.3"N and 12°14'9.7"E and 12°16'10"E that cover an area of about 10 km<sup>2</sup>. The lagoon is part of a barrier-lagoon system that characterized the historical evolution of the Adriatic Sea coastline in the area (Amorosi et al., 1999). It is formed by small, shallow ponds (0.5–1 m depth) and deeper artificial channels (2–3 m depth) that permit the incessant water exchange with the Adriatic Sea driven by tides. It is connected to the Adriatic Sea only through the Candiano Channel that also is the Ravenna operative industrial harbour. The Pialassa Baiona is mainly adopted by local citizens as recreational fishing and hunting site and few clam farming activities exist in the northernmost portion.

The lagoon receives freshwaters from the west through three main channels (Fossatone, Cerba and Cupa-Magni channels) which drain agricultural lands and collect effluents from industrial and municipal treatment plants, located in the southernmost part (Fig. 1). The drainage water entering the lagoon are often rich in nutrients and dissolved metals (Mollema et al., 2013; Greggio et al., 2018b). The highest concentration of nutrients, as well as the highest bacteriological content, are observed in the southern part of the lagoon, in proximity of the via Cupa channel (Soprani et al., 1994). In addition, during the 60s and 70s, high quantities of chemical compounds were discharged



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138 into the lagoon through the via Cupa and Magni channels, carrying wastewater from the industrial  
139 area close to the southern border (Fabbri et al., 1998).

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141 Previous investigations showed that high levels of metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons  
142 (PAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other pollutants occurred in surface, subsurface and  
143 suspended sediments with N-S increasing gradient (Trombini et al., 2003; Matteucci et al., 2005;  
144 Guerra, 2012; Guerra et al., 2014). On these bases, seven sites were selected within the Pialassa  
145 Baiona lagoon in order to cover its overall geochemical complexity and spatial trend of  
146 anthropogenic pressures (Fig. 1). All sites (S1 to S7) were investigated for sediment geochemistry,  
147 while metal bioaccumulation and biomarker responses were measured on mussels transplanted  
148 into six sites (S1, S2, S3, S5, S6 and S7), since *in situ* transplantation into site S4 was not possible for  
149 technical reasons. Mussels were exposed into the lagoon for 30 days, which is acknowledged as a  
150 suitable time for sessile organisms to bioaccumulate contaminants at environmentally  
151 representative levels and to develop physiological responses to "in site" pollution (Viarengo et al.,  
152 2007b). Since previous investigations highlighted a lesser incidence of metals and organic  
153 compounds in the north-western part of the lagoon (Trombini et al., 2003; Fabbri et al., 2006;  
154 Donnini et al., 2007; Franzellitti et al., 2010), Site 7 (S7), located at about 0.5 km from the north-  
155 western border, was defined as internal control site for both geochemical and biological  
156 assessments.

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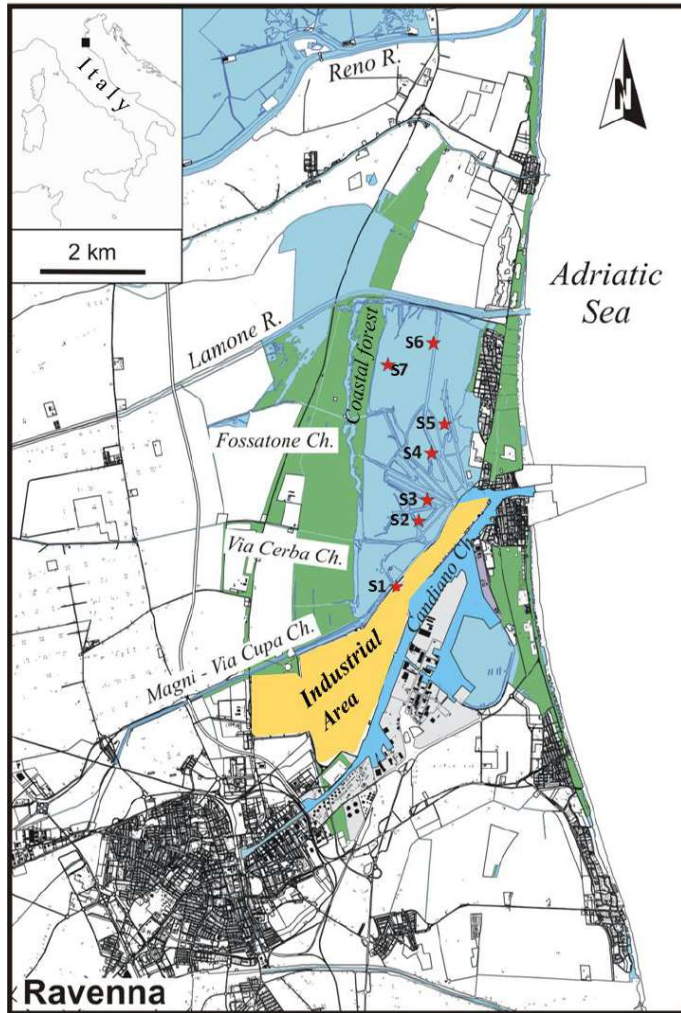


Figure 1. Location map and sampling points (S1 to S7) within the Pialassa Baiona lagoon (Ravenna, Italy). The abbreviations "R." and "Ch." refer to the main rivers and/or channels which supply freshwater to the lagoon. The yellow shape represents the industrial area settled at the south-eastern boundary of the Pialassa Baiona lagoon.

## 2.2 Field activities and measurements

In order to have a better characterization of the environmental conditions influencing the organisms' response, measurements for physico-chemical parameters were conducted at each site. During mussel field exposure (from June 1st to June 30th) six vertical profiles (10 cm resolution) of electrical conductivity, temperature and pH, using a CTD probe were conducted.

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### 2.3 Sediment geochemistry

The bottom sediments were sampled at each site with a manual corer using a Plexiglas tube. After the extrusion, the sections 0 - 5 cm was retained for analysis, placed in polyethylene bottles, were stored at -25 °C. For geochemical analysis, sediment aliquots were dried at 60 °C and homogenized by grinding in agate mortar. On the bottom sediments total elements concentration by X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) and pseudo-total (mobile/available) concentrations by aqua regia digestion (AR) have been performed.

The total metal content of 29 chemical elements (SiO<sub>2</sub>, TiO<sub>2</sub>, Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, MnO, MgO, CaO, Na<sub>2</sub>O, K<sub>2</sub>O, P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, S, As, Ba, Ce, Co, Cr, Cu, La, Nb, Ni, Pb, Rb, Sc, Sr, Th, V, Y, Zn, Zr) has been measured by XRF, using a Philips PW 1480 spectrometer equipped with a Rh tube on pressed powder pellets following matrix correction methods suggested by Franzini et al. (1972; 1975) Leoni and Saitta (1976) and Leoni et al. (1982). Thirty international reference materials were used for the instrument calibration, while accuracy was evaluated using 4 international reference samples, namely BR, BCR-1, TB and AGV-1 (Govindaraju, 1984). The average accuracy was higher than 5 % for trace-element determinations. In order to quantify the pseudo total concentration, 15 g of sediment were digested with a modified aqua regia solution of equal parts concentrated HCl, HNO<sub>3</sub> and deionized H<sub>2</sub>O for one hour in a heating block of hot water bath at the Bureau Veritas Laboratories in Vancouver (Canada). Fifty-three chemical elements (Ag, Al, As, Au, B, Ba, Be, Bi, Ca, Cd, Ce, Co, Cr, Cs, Cu, Fe, Ga, Ge, Hf, Hg, In, K, La, Li, Mg, Mn, Mo, Na, Nb, Ni, P, Pb, Pd, Pt, Rb, Re, S, Sb, Sc, Se, Sn, Sr, Ta, Te, Th, Ti, Tl, U, V, W, Y, Zn, Zr) were analysed by Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS).

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The volatile content (including humidity, organic matter, water incorporated in the lattice of clay minerals, carbon dioxide in the carbonate minerals) was evaluated by thermal analysis using a Setaram TAG24 double furnace apparatus, with simultaneous registration of thermogravimetric (TG), derivative thermogravimetric (DTG), differential thermal analysis (DTA). A CO<sub>2</sub> atmosphere was used to increase the temperature of carbonate decomposition and the carbonate content was estimated by quantifying the weight loss at temperature > 700 °C.

### 2.4 Mussel collection and handling

Adult specimens of the Mediterranean mussel (*M. galloprovincialis*) with a shell-length of 5 ± 1 cm were collected by professional fishermen of the "Cooperativa CONISUB" (Marina di Ravenna,

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193 Italy) along the north-western Adriatic Sea coast in high quality marine areas (Zone A) and  
194 immediately transferred to the laboratory in seawater tanks with continuous aeration. Prior to the  
195 *in situ* deployment, all animals were acclimatized for 6 days in aquaria containing 60 L of aerated  
196 natural seawater (at a ratio of 1 mussel/L) at 16 °C and natural photoperiod, and fed daily on an  
197 algal slurry (Coral Diet Filtrator, Xaquia, Italy) after water renewal. Seventy organisms were dissected  
198 prior to the *in situ* transplantations (time 0, T0) for bioaccumulation and biological endpoint  
199 analyses. Digestive glands and gills were immediately collected, frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored  
200 at -80 °C until analysed. At the same time six groups of seventy organisms each were put in fishnet  
201 bags, fixed to piles and driven into the sediment at sites S1, S2, S3, S5, S6 and S7 (Fig. 1) at about 50  
202 cm from the bottom to ensure continuous submersion during the whole exposure period. Deployed  
203 mussels were regularly controlled at three days intervals and dead mussels were eventually  
204 recorded for survival assessment. Since previous investigations identified the Magni channel as a  
205 heavily polluted site (Fabbri et al., 2000; 2003; Matteucci et al., 2005), three additional fishnet bags,  
206 with seventy organisms each, were transplanted into S1 to execute biomarkers with shorter  
207 timestep.

## 209 2.5 Metal bioaccumulation analysis

210 Metal bioaccumulation was evaluated on mussels prior to the *in situ* deployment (Time 0, T0)  
211 and after 30 days of field exposure into the lagoon. Metal bioaccumulation from each site was used  
212 to calculate the bioaccumulation factor as enrichment/depletion compared to T0. Samples (0.2 g  
213 each) were digested in a microwave system with ultrapure HNO<sub>3</sub>. The resulting fluid was diluted by  
214 adding deionized water to a final volume of 30 mL, at the Department of Environmental Science of  
215 the University of Siena. Analytical blanks and certified reference material were included in the  
216 analysis, specifically the mussel tissue ERM-CE278 (*Mytilus edulis*) from the Institute for Reference  
217 Materials and Measurements, Geel, Belgium.

218 The samples were analysed by inductively coupled plasma quadrupole mass spectrometry  
219 (ICP-QMS) using an Agilent 7500ce instrument at the laboratories of the Federal Institute for  
220 Geosciences and Natural Resources in Berlin. Atomic fluorescence spectrometry was used for the  
221 determination of mercury (Instrument PSA 10.035 Millennium Merlin 1631). The Table S1 reports  
222 the results for the investigated elements in the certified reference material. Additional details can  
223 be found in Capolupo et al. (2017).

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2.6 *Biological endpoints*

2.6.1 Survival percentage and Stress on Stress

The survival (SURV) was calculated as the percentage of mussels found alive over the exposure period with respect to the initial number of individuals (70 at each site).

For Stress on Stress (SOS) assessment, immediately after collection, 15 mussels per site were subjected to anoxia by air exposure at 15 °C in a humidified chamber. Death symptoms were open valves and absence of muscular activity. The survival was assessed daily, and results expressed as the time at which 100% mortality was achieved (Viarengo et al., 2007a).

2.6.2 Cytochemical parameters

Lysosomal membrane stability (LMS), lysosome to cytoplasm volume ratio (LYS/CYT) and lipofuscin content (LIF) were assessed in the digestive gland from 20 mussels per each site (N = 20). After dissection, glands were mounted on specific aluminium supports for cryostat microtomy (chucks), frozen in N-hexane at -70 °C, and stored at -80 °C. All assessments were performed according to the UNEP/RAMOGGE manual (1999) on 10 µm-thick gland sections obtained using a cryostat (MICROM HM 505 N) at -30 °C. The LMS was measured as the time necessary to produce the maximum staining reaction between the lysosomal hydrolase N-acetyl-β-hexosaminidase and a specific substrate (Capolupo et al., 2016). Briefly, sections were incubated at 37 °C in a shaking water bath with a destabilization buffer (0.1 M Na-citrate, pH 4.5) for different times (0, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 and 40 min), exposed to the substrate naphtol AS-BI N-acetyl-β-D-glucosaminide (Sigma, N4006) for 20 min and finally stained with the diazonium dye Fast Violet B (Sigma, F1631) (1 mg/ml in 0.1 M phosphate buffer, pH 7.4). For each site, slides not exposed to the destabilization buffer (0 min) were screened for the LYS/CYT assessment, which was determined by evaluating the cytoplasmic and lysosomal areas according to Capolupo et al. (2017). The LIF determination was performed according to Martin-Diaz et al. (2009). Gland sections were fixed in calcium formol and immersed for 5 min in an aqueous solution of 1 % ferric chloride and 1 % potassium ferricyanide in a 3:1 ratio.

For all lysosomal parameters, tissue sections were assessed under a light microscope (Axioskop 40, Carl Zeiss, Milan, Italy) equipped with a 40X objective and a digital camera (AxioCam MRC, Carl Zeiss, Milan, Italy) as reported by Capolupo et al. (2016). Results were expressed as labilization period for LMS, percentage of lysosomal volume inside digestive cells for LYS/CYT and arbitrary units for LIF.

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### 2.6.3 Enzymatic biomarkers

The acetylcholinesterase activity (AChE) activity was determined in mussel gills as previously reported (Valbonesi et al., 2003). Gills from 5 mussels per site (N = 5) were homogenized in a 0.1 M phosphate buffer, pH 7.4, and centrifuged at 9000 ×g at 4 °C for 30 min. Supernatant aliquots were incubated at 25 °C with 0.5 mM acetylthiocholine iodide (ASCh) and 0.33 mM DTNB (Ellman et al., 1961), and read at 405 nm for 10 min. Results are reported as nmoles/min/mg protein. The sample protein concentration was measured according to Lowry et al. (1951).

For catalase (CAT) assessment, about 50 mg of digestive gland was dissected from 5 mussels per site (N = 5), homogenized in 50 mM potassium-phosphate buffer (pH 7.0, 0.5 mM Na<sub>2</sub>EDTA) and centrifuged at 15,000 g at 4 °C. The CAT activity was determined by measuring the time-dependent decrease of absorbance at 240 nm in the presence of 55 mM H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. Data were expressed as μmol/min/mg of total protein.

The Peroxisomal acyl-CoA oxidase (AOX) activity was determined on five pools of 2 digestive glands per site (N = 5) according to Orbea et al. (2006). Tissues were homogenized in four volumes of TVBE buffer (1 mM sodium bicarbonate, 1 mM EDTA, 0.1 % ethanol and 0.01 % Triton X-100), pH 7.6 and centrifuged at 500 × g for 15 min at 4 °C. Supernatants were diluted 1:10 in TVBE buffer and spectrophotometrically assayed for AOX activity at a wavelength of 502 nm. Data were expressed as milliunits/mg of AOX protein (equivalent to nmol H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>/min x mg protein).

### 2.6.4 Metallothionein content (MT)

The metallothionein (MT) content was analysed on five pools of 5 mussel digestive glands (about 1.5 g of tissue) per site according to Viarengo et al. (1997). Final absorbance was measured at 410 nm, using reduced glutathione as reference standard. Data were expressed as μg of MT/mg tissue.

### 2.6.5 Mussel Expert System

Data from biological responses were integrated using the Mussel Expert System (MES) developed by Dagnino et al. (2007) in a unique and synoptic five-level Health Status Index (HSI) ranging from A (healthy) to E (pathological status). The system classification is based on (i) the number of biomarkers altered in the exposed organisms (significant changes greater than 20 % were utilized to evaluate alterations in the health status of the organisms); (ii) the magnitude of the alteration; (iii) the role of the autophagic process and (iv) the level of biological organization affected

(i.e., cell, tissue and organism level). For each biomarker/site, the system calculates an Alteration Factor (AF), which is the ratio between biomarker levels from treatments and control, and an Alteration Level (AL), which defines the magnitude of observed alterations based on the AFs magnitude and the biomarker toxicological profile (i.e. increasing, decreasing, bell-shaped). ALs and AFs are then processed by the system applying a set of rules in the “if...then” form in order to calculate the overall HSI associated to the exposure to each site. The simultaneous alterations of general stress parameters (i.e. lysosomal responses) and biomarkers of exposure to specific classes of compounds (e.g. MT for metals; AOX for POPs) is further computed and eventually recognized by the system as an early warning signal regarding the presence or excess of those pollutants in the monitored sites or tested condition.

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## 2.7 Data analysis

All data were tested for normal distribution using the Shapiro-Wilk test, while the Levene's test was employed to test the equal variance. Significant differences between S1 to S6 compared to the control site S7 were estimated by a One-Way ANOVA (SigmaStat, SPSS) followed by the Duncan's post-hoc test. The evaluation of potential linear relationships between biological endpoints and physico-chemical parameters (including pH, temperature, electrical conductivity, metal concentrations in sediments and mussel tissues) were conducted through the Pearson's correlation analysis. For all performed tests, significance was established at  $p < 0.05$ . All analyses were performed using the software SigmaPlot 13 (Systat Software Inc. San Jose, CA, USA).

## 3 Results and discussion

### 3.1 Physico-chemical data

The vertical profiles of temperature, pH and electrical conductivity (EC) measured during mussels field exposure as well as a graphical representation of the temperature, pH and EC vertical profiles for June 14<sup>th</sup> are presented respectively in Table S2 and in Figure S1 of supplementary material. The site S1, located in the Magni Channel at the southern side of the lagoon (Fig. 1), is different from the other sites for all monitored parameters. It shows higher water column temperature, reduced EC and a lower pH value, for the entire monitoring period (Table S2). Specifically, S1 shows the lowest EC among the sites with a marked vertical gradient (Fig. S1A) and

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8 it is also the site with the highest temperature, up to 32.3 °C. Moreover, it records the highest  
9 average profile temperature during the surveying period, at least 2 °C constantly higher compared  
10 to all the other sites (Fig. S1B). Site S1 receives freshwater from artificial drainage channel network  
11 surrounding the town of Ravenna (Greggio et al., 2018b). Previous investigations also reported  
12 water temperature fluctuation wider (10-24 °C) in the southernmost channel with respect to the  
13 lagoon average (16-18 °C), which was subjected to variations of about 10 °C within the 24 hours  
14 owing to discharges of cooling water from the nearby industrial site (Franzellitti et al., 2010). A  
15 thermal vertical gradient is also present in S5 probably associated to local limited water circulation  
16 favouring water warming up (Fig. S1A). The pH is the lowest in S1, ranging from 7.2 to 7.8, and with  
17 a marked vertical profile. In all the other sites the pH is instead similar and fairly constant around 8.  
18 Only at S5 the observed pH values are higher (8.0-8.3) for the entire surveying period (Table S2).

### 25 3.2 Sediment data

27 The results of the geochemical analyses are presented in Table 1. According to the  
28 geochemical composition of the major elements (expressed as %), and referencing to the work of  
29 Dinelli et al. (2007) which compared geochemical proxies with grain size analysing borehole samples  
30 in the same geographic area, the Pialassa Baiona bed sediment samples are classified as fine  
31 grained-sediments (with a recalculated SiO<sub>2</sub>/Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> ratio < 3) enriched in carbonates. The sediments  
32 are also rich in organic matter (OM in Table 1, ranging from 1.1 to 3.4) as already reported for  
33 adjacent coastal lagoons (Migani et al., 2015). The bulk geochemical composition is quite  
34 homogeneous among the different sites, with S1 being slightly enriched in carbonates (Table 1).

35 The Pialassa Baiona bed sediments composition is a mixture of carbonate and silicates with  
36 variable amount of organic matter. The geochemical results, in terms of total sediment composition,  
37 are comparable with those reported by Donnini et al. (2007) although the number of sites was  
38 different. As far as total concentrations are concerned, these are within the range of regional  
39 background, as proposed by Migani et al. (2015), taking into consideration Holocene data from  
40 boreholes in the area not affected by anthropogenic inputs (Amorosi et al., 2002; Curzi et al., 2006;  
41 Dinelli et al., 2012, Greggio et al., 2018a). Except for sites S6 and S7, Zn and Cu concentrations  
42 exceed the maximum value observed in the background sediments, respectively of 124 and 41  
43 mg/kg (Table 1). In particular, for S1 site Zn and Cu total concentrations are double respect to  
44 background, respectively 316 and 87 mg/kg, in line with concentration detected in the neighbouring  
45 Pialassa Piomboni by Pignotti et al. (2018). Pb concentrations in sites S3 and S5 are 30 mg/kg being

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slightly higher respect to background level established at 29 mg/kg by Migani et al. (2015), but certainly lower than Pb concentration in the Pialassa Piomboni by Pignotti et al. (2018) where a maximum concentration of 257 mg/kg was measured.

**Table 1. Results of the chemical analyses on sediments. The table includes either pseudo total Aqua Regia (AR) and total XRF data. Table includes also the ranges observed in boreholes in the area, considered representative of the natural background (Amorosi et al., 2002; Curzi et al., 2006). Bold elements exceed natural background. AR DL indicates Detection Limit for Aqua Regia extraction.**

		S1		S2		S3		S4		S5		S6		S7		Natural background	
		AR DL	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR		XRF
Ag	µg/kg	2	991	-	269	-	268	-	173	-	275	-	179	-	62	-	-
Al	%	0.01	1.39	6.31	1.41	7.02	1.23	6.98	1.10	6.97	1.35	7.09	1.39	7.07	1.41	6.55	4.4-9.7
As	mg/kg	0.1	7.8	-	5.9	-	6.1	-	5.9	-	7.8	-	6.8	-	6.7	-	-
Au	µg/kg	0.2	16.2	-	5.4	-	11.1	-	2.6	-	5.1	-	3.4	-	1	-	-
B	mg/kg	1	25	-	28	-	26	-	24	-	38	-	33	-	22	-	-
Ba	mg/kg	0.5	61.9	263	43.7	218	41.8	260	42.6	322	40.1	258	38.7	294	36.5	258	220-530
Be	mg/kg	0.1	0.4	-	0.7	-	0.7	-	0.8	-	0.5	-	0.6	-	0.6	-	-
Bi	mg/kg	0.02	0.6	-	0.38	-	0.35	-	0.26	-	0.38	-	0.31	-	0.28	-	-
Ca	%	0.01	11.27	11.37	7.45	7.51	7.87	7.96	7.34	7.87	6.10	6.65	7.24	7.43	8.61	9.52	0.3-17.2
Cd	mg/kg	0.01	0.68	-	0.29	-	0.33	-	0.21	-	0.5	-	0.35	-	0.11	-	-
Ce	mg/kg	0.1	19.4	42	17	55	17.6	71	16.8	52	17.8	64	18.3	42	20.1	58	14-83
Co	mg/kg	0.1	10.2	12	10.9	11	10.7	12	9.9	11	11.7	14	11.5	12	10.6	11	5-29
Cr	mg/kg	0.5	70.6	131	57.5	103	51.4	132	47.7	131	59.9	138	59.3	130	47	100	96-270
Cs	mg/kg	0.02	1.36	-	1.15	-	1.08	-	1.16	-	1.11	-	1.39	-	1.57	-	-
Cu	mg/kg	<b>0.01</b>	<b>84.1</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51.1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4-41</b>
Fe	%	0.01	2.17	3.42	2.46	3.92	2.23	3.86	2.00	3.69	2.54	3.83	2.30	3.64	2.36	3.72	2.1-5.3
Ga	mg/kg	0.1	4.4	-	4.2	-	4	-	3.9	-	4	-	4.2	-	4.4	-	-
Ge	mg/kg	0.1	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	-
Hf	mg/kg	0.02	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.04	-	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.05	-	-
Hg	mg/kg	0.005	25.7	-	1.42	-	1.48	-	1.89	-	2.38	-	2.26	-	0.1	-	-
In	mg/kg	0.02	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.02	-	0.02	-	0.03	-	0.02	-	0.03	-	-
K	%	0.01	0.33	1.77	0.36	1.98	0.31	2.06	0.28	2.04	0.39	1.97	0.36	2.04	0.35	2.03	0.9-3.3
La	mg/kg	0.5	8.3	19	7.7	26	7.3	22	6.9	18	8	20	8.5	34	9.5	20	17-47
Li	mg/kg	0.1	26.1	-	30.6	-	27.8	-	24.9	-	28.7	-	28	-	28.1	-	-
Mg	%	0.01	1.37	2.41	1.34	2.38	1.30	2.38	1.22	2.44	1.42	2.54	1.55	2.55	1.58	2.35	2.2-4.2
Mn	mg/kg	1	531	893	527	865	549	896	513	949	511	801	550	897	644	1396	230-1470
Mo	mg/kg	0.01	2.67	-	3.33	-	2.61	-	2.28	-	3.34	-	1.57	-	0.54	-	-
Na	%	0.001	0.85	0.68	0.98	0.69	0.90	0.75	0.65	0.99	1.18	0.67	0.85	0.78	0.42	0.85	0.5-2.1
Nb	mg/kg	0.02	0.37	15	0.28	13	0.25	13	0.29	14	0.34	16	0.37	10	0.29	13	8-20
Ni	mg/kg	0.1	50.9	73	56.5	73	50.7	88	46.3	72	55.3	82	51.5	74	46.4	57	39-148
P	%	0.001	0.11	0.10	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.03-0.08
Pb	mg/kg	<b>0.01</b>	<b>27.92</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22.71</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22.14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18.16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26.22</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20.71</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11.99</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5-29</b>
Pd	µg/kg	10	46	-	10	-	12	-	11	-	10	-	<10	-	<10	-	-
Pt	µg/kg	2	37	-	6	-	4	-	4	-	4	-	<2	-	<2	-	-
Rb	mg/kg	0.1	24.9	113	22.2	128	20.8	128	22.4	113	22.3	130	25.1	114	29.8	89	56-200
Re	µg/kg	1	7	-	1	-	2	-	<1	-	2	-	2	-	<1	-	-
S	%	0.02	0.6	-	0.55	-	0.6	-	0.54	-	0.72	-	0.71	-	0.34	-	-
Sb	mg/kg	0.02	0.51	-	0.29	-	0.25	-	0.19	-	0.37	-	0.29	-	0.19	-	-
Sc	mg/kg	0.1	3.4	11	3.6	11	3.4	6	3.2	8	3.7	10	3.7	8	4.1	13	12-21
Se	mg/kg	0.1	0.9	-	0.7	-	0.7	-	0.5	-	1.1	-	0.7	-	0.5	-	-
Si	%	-	-	17.72	-	19.43	-	19.90	-	20.61	-	19.31	-	20.95	-	20.03	14.7-29.3
Sn	mg/kg	0.1	3.2	-	1.8	-	1.5	-	1.3	-	1.9	-	1.5	-	0.8	-	-
Sr	mg/kg	0.5	353	368	274.4	300	224.8	252	218	265	259.1	281	281.6	291	290.5	310	113-442
Th	mg/kg	0.1	3.5	4	4.1	5	3.6	17	3.6	25	4	11	4.2	10	4.7	7	<3-19
Ti	%	0.001	0.009	0.308	0.005	0.328	0.006	0.347	0.008	0.349	0.006	0.324	0.010	0.334	0.015	0.336	0.02-0.58
Tl	mg/kg	0.02	0.26	-	0.17	-	0.21	-	0.19	-	0.27	-	0.2	-	0.14	-	-
U	mg/kg	0.1	1.3	-	1.5	-	1.2	-	1.1	-	1.3	-	1.2	-	1.1	-	-
V	mg/kg	2	32	85	33	85	30	99	26	94	35	113	33	94	31	76	54-169
Y	mg/kg	0.01	10.02	18	9.39	23	9.28	24	8.86	20	9.7	24	9.63	19	10.58	19	18-43
Zn	mg/kg	<b>0.1</b>	<b>306.6</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>129.8</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>133.1</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>101.2</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>146.9</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>109.3</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>58.2</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43-124</b>
Zr	mg/kg	0.1	1.1	108	1.2	91	1	105	1	124	1.1	86	1.2	92	1.9	106	76-260
H <sub>2</sub> O <sup>-</sup>	%	-	-	2.7	-	4.0	-	2.8	-	2.4	-	3.7	-	2.7	-	2.1	-
OM	%	-	-	2.8	-	1.8	-	2.0	-	1.7	-	3.4	-	2.2	-	1.1	-
H <sub>2</sub> O <sup>+</sup>	%	-	-	6.0	-	6.5	-	5.4	-	4.4	-	6.5	-	5.8	-	2.3	-
CO <sub>2</sub>	%	-	-	11.6	-	8.9	-	9.1	-	9.3	-	8.6	-	7.4	-	12.3	-

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LOI	%	-	-	23.1	-	21.2	-	19.3	-	17.8	-	22.3	-	18.1	-	17.8	4.8-29.3
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As regards the Aqua Regia extraction, data showed the presence of elements seldom analysed in sediments of the area. The most striking features are the differences observed between S1 and all the other sites for a number of elements, in particular Ag, As, Au, Bi, Cd, Cr, Cu, Hg, Pb, Pd, Pt, Re, Zn (Table 1). According to Donnini et al. (2007), S7 should be considered as unpolluted site and if its results are taken as reference, a strong enrichment is clear for several elements (Fig. 2). Mercury, which is a well-known pollutant in the area (Misericocchi et al., 1993; Fabbri et al., 1998; Fabbri et al., 2001a, b; Trombini et al., 2003; Matteucci et al., 2005; Guerra et al., 2007; Covelli et al., 2011; Guerra, 2012; Dominik et al., 2014; Borghesi et al., 2016), is the element with the largest enrichment (up to 250 times compared to S7) and reaches relatively high concentrations in the Magni Channel site (S1, up to 25 mg/kg). Mercury dynamics in the lagoon is complex and although the maxima in concentrations are not at the surface, the element is heavily mobilized at the water/sediment interface in the southern part of the lagoon (Covelli et al., 2011). Borghesi et al. (2016) highlighted similar behaviour among Hg and Ag, Au, Cd, Cu and Zn for six different coastal lagoons in the same Region due to metal affinity for the fine fraction of the sediment.

Notable enrichments are then evident in Figure 2 for valuable metals like Pt, Au, Ag, Re and Pd, which showed substantial increase (up to 10-fold) compared to S7 and to median values reported by Cicchella et al. (2015), that represent a useful reference for metal concentrations in mineral matrix obtained with the same analytical technique and at the same laboratory. In particular, Platinum and Palladium are of recent technogenic use and their anthropogenic fluxes greatly exceed the natural ones (Ruchter and Surer, 2015; McGillicuddy et al., 2017). Platinum and Palladium are largely used in automobile catalytic converters (Bossi and Gediga, 2017) and their dispersion increases particularly around urban areas in roadside soils (Ravindra et al., 2004; Ruchter and Surer, 2015; Leopold et al., 2018; Zuzolo et al., 2018), but also in marine areas close to urban settings (Cobelo-García et al., 2011; Abdou et al., 2016).

The Silver concentration reaches a peak at S1 with 0.99 mg/kg, at least four times more than the other sites in the Pialassa Baiona and ten times more than other coastal lagoons in the same Region as resulted by Borghesi et al. (2016). The Ag enrichment is controlled by many factors such as pH, OM, as well as the source material. At typical environmental pH values, Ag is adsorbed onto Fe hydroxides, in preference to Cu and Zn (Lottermoser et al., 1999). In the near Venice lagoon, Giusti and Zang (2002) measured Ag sediment concentrations 5-6 fold higher than this study,

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justifying the abundance with both famous glassmaking firms in Murano island and the large volume of untreated sewage sludges discharged into the lagoon from the nearby Marghera industrial area.

Moderate enrichments (four times compared to S7) are shown by Mo, Cd, Zn, Sn and Cu that can be more directly linked to industrial effluents as reported by Giusti and Zang (2002) in Venice lagoon and Borghesi et al. (2016) for the same Region. Enrichments in all these elements also characterize the other sites, although at an order of magnitude lower than S1 (around 2 times).

Many of the metals detected in sediments show a decreasing concentration with increasing distance from the industrial area located in the southern part of the lagoon. This suggests that industrial discharge effluents play a major role in the lagoon contamination compared to effluents from urban and agricultural activities. In fact, the distribution of some elements, including Zn, Cr, Cu, Mo, Ag, and Hg, follow trends similar to those reported for other organic pollutants of industrial origin in the same area (Fabbri et al. 2006; Vassura et al. 2005). Vassura et al.(2005), for instance, detected a clear South-North increasing pattern of prioritized PAHs, with sediments from the Magni channel area (the present S1) showing concentrations of pyrene, fluoranthene, anthracene and phenanthrene up to 10,000 times higher compared to the northern sites.

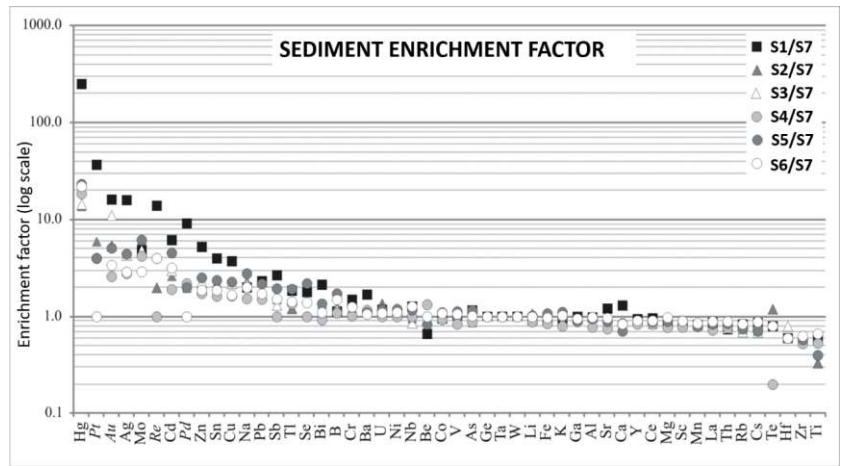


Figure 2. Metal enrichment in sediments from selected sites within the Pialassa Baiona lagoon. Data are normalized on Site 7 (S7), which was selected as internal reference based on previous literature (Trombini et al., 2003; Fabbri et al., 2006; Donnini et al., 2007; Franzellitti et al., 2010). Elements in italics (*Pt, Au, Re, Pd*) were not investigated in the mussel tissues.

### 3.3 Metal bioaccumulation

Results of the chemical analyses on mussel tissues are presented in Table 2. Data were obtained for all sites except S1, which was characterized by a high mortality rate (more details in section 3.4). T0 data, originating from mussels growing in the Adriatic Sea, are in line with basal level for As, Ba, Cd, Cr, Cu, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Se, V, Zn identified by Fattorini et al. (2008). The trend of concentrations of trace elements in soft tissue of *Mytilus galloprovincialis* belonging to T0 is (Zn, Fe) > (As, Mn, Cu, Ni, Pb) > (Cd, Cr, Ag) > (Hg, Sb). The trend is confirmed also for average trace elements concentration among all sites: (Fe, Zn) > (As, Mn, Cu) > (Pb, Ag, Ni, Cd, Cr, Hg) > Sb. The only notable change is the Ag enrichment from 0.12 mg/kg in T0 tissues to a mean concentration of 0.80 mg/kg in tissues from experimental sites. Although Cd, Hg, Sb were not included, the same abundance trend was found by Giusti and Zang (2002) in the Venice Lagoon: Fe > Zn > (Cu, Mn, As) > Ag > Pb > (Ni, Cr). Absolute concentrations of Zn, Cu, Pb and Cd found in this study (Table 2) fall in the lowest part of the ranges summarized by Benali et al. (2017) for 10 locations in Mediterranean Sea.

**Table 2. Results of the chemical analyses on mussel tissues (bioaccumulation). Data refers to T0 and to the 5 sites were mussels survived or remained after the exposure period.**

	unit	T0	S2	S3	S5	S6	S7
Ag	mg/kg	0.12	0.99	0.98	1.21	0.62	0.82
Al	mg/kg	36	39	56	98	82	47
As	mg/kg	9.83	12.8	9.98	11.9	12.4	11.4
B	mg/kg	25.7	22.9	19.7	22.8	25.9	19.4
Ba	mg/kg	1.95	0.35	0.49	0.54	0.52	0.36
Be	mg/kg	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.006	0.004
Bi	mg/kg	0.057	0.009	0.009	0.007	0.011	0.008
Ca	mg/kg	2004	1322	1299	1726	1679	1157
Cd	mg/kg	0.70	0.71	0.78	0.76	0.77	0.50
Ce	mg/kg	0.118	0.051	0.092	0.124	0.166	0.075
Co	mg/kg	0.54	0.323	0.3	0.303	0.511	0.315
Cr	mg/kg	0.57	0.6	0.53	0.67	0.53	0.64
Cs	mg/kg	0.022	0.014	0.016	0.022	0.019	0.015
Cu	mg/kg	4.65	2.71	2.63	2.81	2.66	1.46
Fe	mg/kg	67.5	68.1	77.4	116.0	103.4	91.7
Ga	mg/kg	0.018	0.007	0.011	0.019	0.013	0.009
Hg	mg/kg	0.082	0.35	0.32	0.41	0.27	0.16
K	mg/kg	11084	10988	9729	11129	11244	9535
La	mg/kg	0.138	0.035	0.057	0.074	0.109	0.06
Li	mg/kg	0.88	0.46	0.41	0.51	0.58	0.34
Mg	mg/kg	4198	3851	3467	3676	4422	2506
Mn	mg/kg	4.84	5.19	7.50	8.16	8.03	5.03
Mo	mg/kg	0.645	0.353	0.368	0.317	0.394	0.274
Na	mg/kg	22885	20201	15986	19714	24751	13438
Nb	mg/kg	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.003	0.002
Ni	mg/kg	3.61	0.72	0.69	0.73	0.92	0.64
Pb	mg/kg	1.41	0.87	0.52	0.57	0.94	0.64
Rb	mg/kg	5.29	4.08	4.32	4.27	4.3	3.78
Sb	mg/kg	0.018	0.038	0.031	0.03	0.048	0.039
Sc	mg/kg	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.04
Se	mg/kg	2.27	2.10	2.10	2.01	1.83	1.52
Sn	mg/kg	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.10	0.09	0.08

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Sr	mg/kg	31.2	17.7	16.5	20.6	22.8	14.3
Th	mg/kg	0.019	0.011	0.014	0.025	0.031	0.016
Ti	mg/kg	0.49	0.34	0.62	1.07	0.88	0.50
Tl	mg/kg	0.003	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.001
U	mg/kg	0.127	0.049	0.040	0.054	0.065	0.032
V	mg/kg	1.15	0.44	0.49	0.55	0.80	0.47
Y	mg/kg	0.080	0.046	0.071	0.085	0.094	0.04
Zn	mg/kg	107.1	116	62.4	95.6	134	86.9
Zr	mg/kg	0.064	0.013	0.025	0.025	0.021	0.018

The bioaccumulation factor is graphically showed in Figure 3. Enrichments are notable for Ag, Hg and Sb in all the sites, with higher bioaccumulation at S5 located in the centre of the lagoon in a pond close to the outlet of a canal from the southern part of the lagoon, the most contaminated one. Although not high as those measured in mussels from other sites such as Northern England (Giusti et al., 1999), these three elements could be the most critical since other elements known for toxicity to mussels (e.g. Cd, Pb, Ni) (Benali et al. 2017; Yigit et al. 2017) are similar or depleted compared to T0 (Fig. 3).

The enrichment in mercury was relatively high, as expected and already verified both in living clams (Trombini et al., 2003) and mussels (Fabbri et al., 2006; Donnini et al., 2007). Moreover, the Hg cycling at the sediment-water interface (Covelli et al., 2011), could be a reason for the mercury enrichment observed in all sediment samples and may also reflect the high Hg concentrations observed in mussels exposed at S5 (Fig. 3).

Silver has recently attracted much interest since its increasing application as bactericidal and usage in numerous consumer products lead to contamination of aquatic ecosystems, often in form of Ag nanoparticles (Yuan et al., 2018; Outa et al., 2020). Silver speciation in environment is dependent by local environmental conditions and usually forms stable complexes with Lewis bases such as amines, halides, and thiolates and with dissolved organic matter altering its toxicity (Mousavi et al., 2015). In Pialassa Baiona, Greggio et al. (2020) showed dissolved concentrations ranging from 0.02 to 10 µg/L, with higher concentrations in basins with drainage water input. Concerning bioaccumulation, recent works reported the effect of Ag nanoparticles on soft tissues of mussels. *Mytilus galloprovincialis* accumulated Ag in digestive gland tubule cells and gills during the entire year (Duroudier et al., 2019) and intralysosomal metal accumulation and lysosomal membrane destabilisation were observed (Jimeno-Romero et al., 2017). Compare to this study (max 1.21 mg/kg dry wt), Giusti and Zang (2002) in Venice lagoon found silver concentrations up to 6.2 mg/kg dry wt that are aligned with outcomes in other species of the genus *Mytilus* as reported by Martin et al. (1988).

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Antimony is pervasive in synthetic polymers (including textiles, plastics and rubbers) (Filella et al., 2019) and it is widely applied in alloy industries as flame retardant, as pigments for colour or colour protection (Filella et al., 2002; James and Turner 2020). Although rock weathering and soil runoff supply Sb to the environment, anthropogenic source is crucial. James and Turner (2020) demonstrated that Sb could also be mobilised via digestion and bioturbation by deposit-feeders in sediment contaminated by plastic or directly adsorbed from microplastics taken up by mussels (Van Cauwenberghe et al., 2015). Antimony concentrations in unpolluted waters are less than 1 µg/L (Filella et al., 2002). Greggio et al. (2020) reported Sb water concentrations in western ponds of the Pialassa Baiona ranging from 0.05 to 0.5 µg/L. Limited is the knowledge of Antimony concentration in mussels. In this study Sb in mussel tissues ranged from 0.01 to 0.05 mg/kg (Table 2) with a 2-3 as enrichment factor (Fig. 3). De Gregori et al. (2007) found tissue concentration ranging from 0.007 to 0.06 mg/kg in unpolluted area, while 0.23 to 1.030 mg/kg in harbour dock protected by antimony–lead alloy cover. Garcia (2015) measured Sb concentration ranging from 0.003 to 0.023 mg/kg in the tissues of *Corbicula fluminea* collected in a river affected by a decommissioned Antimony smelter.

It is worth noting the depletion relative to T0 of elements like Cu, Pb and Ni, (Fig. 3 and Table 2). This might suggest that these elements are not strongly mobilized in the lagoon environment, although slight differences can be recognized between S7 and the other sites. This is in contrast with results by Pignotti et al. (2018) that using sequential extraction, defined Cu and Pb as the most mobile elements in sediments (~70 % and ~80 %, of the total, respectively) in the neighbouring Pialassa Piomboni. In agreement with Pignotti et al. (2018) is the Ni behaviour here characterised by low mobility and predominantly bound to the residual fraction of the sediment, suggesting a lithogenic origin.

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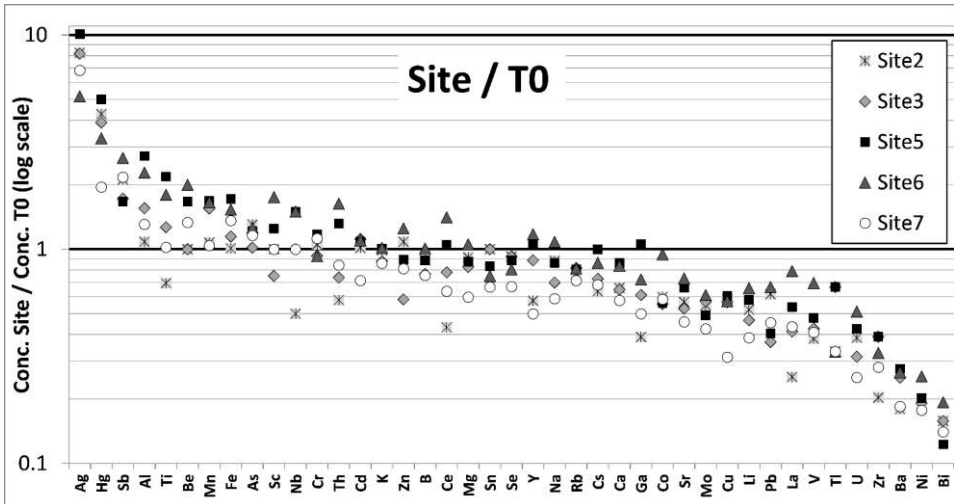


Figure 3. Bioaccumulation factor of metals in mussel tissues. The analysis has been performed on the tissue of mussels deployed for 30 days into different sites of the Pialassa Baiona lagoon compared to mussels analysed before the *in situ* deployment (T0). Elements are ranked according to average enrichment.

3.4 Biological effects on mussels

The mussel 30-day exposure within the Pialassa Baiona lagoon resulted in significant alterations of biological endpoints measured at different levels of the hierarchical ladder (from cell to organism) (Fig. 4). Among the investigated sites, adverse conditions for the mussel survival were observed in S1, with about 80 % mortality *versus* 10 % recorded elsewhere (Fig. 4A). Different from S2 – S7, survival (and biomarker) data were measured in S1 after just three days of exposure, in line with previous observations on mussels transplanted in the same area (Franzellitti et al., 2010). The short time spent *in situ* within S1 was not such to allow mussels to bioaccumulate metals at levels considered environmentally realistic, for which  $\geq 28$  days are usually required (Viarengo et al., 2007a); thus, data of metal bioaccumulation are missing for this site. Sediment concentrations of Hg, Cr, Zn, Cu and Ba, known for their toxicity on marine mussels (De Los Ríos et al., 2013) were negatively and significantly correlated with mussel survival (Fig. 5). Relationships were also detected between survival and average salinity and temperature, which showed minima and maxima in S1, respectively (Table S3). Both parameters are known to be responsible for the mussel physiological fitness and to influence their response to toxicants synergistically (Fabbri and Dinelli, 2014;

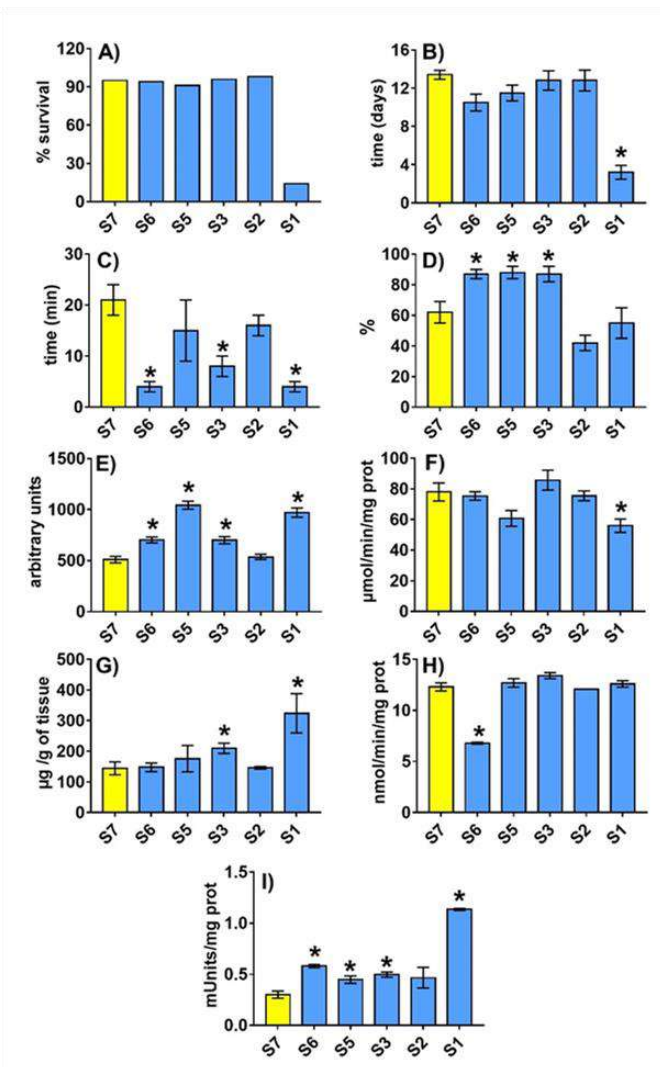
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8 DeCourten and Brander, 2017). It is thus plausible that physico-chemical conditions of both natural  
9 and anthropogenic nature simultaneously influenced the survival of mussels across the lagoon.  
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11 Data of *in situ* survival follow trends similar to those from the SOS test, which showed  
12 significant reduction of survival functions in mussels from S1 (Fig. 4B). SOS is measured as the  
13 survival of mussels in dry conditions, which is an event regularly experienced by intertidal organisms  
14 due to tidal fluctuations. The SOS data display significant and negative correlation with a suite of  
15 metals measured in both sediments and mussel tissues, including Ba, Bi, Cu, Sr and Zn, among others  
16 (Fig. 5). These findings are in line with previous evidence obtained in *M. galloprovincialis*, which  
17 showed significant SOS decrease after 3 to 7 days of exposure to trace levels of Cu and Zn-based  
18 antifouling agents (Viarengo et al., 1995; Marcheselli et al., 2011). Further elements showing  
19 marked enrichment in S1 sediments, as Cd (0.68 mg/kg) and Hg (25.7 µg/kg), were significantly  
20 correlated with SOS (Fig. 4). SOS and survival data were found to be significantly and positively  
21 correlated to each other and showed positive and negative correlation with electrical conductivity  
22 and temperature, respectively (Table S3). This indicates that higher temperatures and salinity  
23 measured at S1 throughout the exposure period may have cumulatively increased the impact of  
24 metals on the mussel vital functions. Although it is acknowledged that SOS sensitivity is lower than  
25 other sub-lethal and general stress biomarkers (Viarengo et al., 2007a), data from this study  
26 highlight its suitability to detect causal relationships between metal contamination/bioavailability  
27 and adverse effects on mussels at the “organism” level.  
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**Figure 4. Biomarker modulation in mussels transplanted into the Pialassa Baiona lagoon.** Data from all sites (mean ± SEM) have been measured in mussels collected after 30 days of exposure, except for S1, referred to mussels collected after 3 days of exposure due to high mortality. A, survival (SURV); B, Stress on stress (SOS); C, lysosomal membrane stability (LMS); D, lysosome to cytoplasm volume ratio (LYS/CYT); E, lipofuscin (LIF), F, catalase activity (CAT); G, metallothionein content (MT); H, acetylcholinesterase activity (ACHE); I, peroxisomal acyl-CoA oxidase (AOX). Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences compared to the control site S7 (One-Way ANOVA, Duncan's post-hoc test).

LMS is the most sensitive biomarker of general stress in bivalves and previous studies highlighted strict relationships between the xenobiotic-driven decrease of this parameter in *Mytilus*

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528 spp. and alterations to higher functions, such as growth and/or reproduction (Moore et al., 2006;  
530 Martinez-Gomez et al., 2008). Data reported in Figure 4C indicate a significant LMS reduction in  
531 digestive glands from mussels collected at S1 (3-day exposure), S3 and S6 (30-day exposure)  
532 compared to control mussels from S7. Interestingly, none of the measured metals, physico-chemical  
533 factors and/or biological endpoints was correlated with trends of LMS in exposed mussels (Fig. 5,  
534 Table S3). Although positive relationships between (dissolved) metal exposure and LMS have been  
535 reported in mussels under laboratory conditions (Viarengo et al., 1997), no correlation has been  
536 highlighted following 28 days of *in situ* exposure into a nearby lagoon (i.e. Pialassa Piomboni,  
537 Ravenna, Italy; Capolupo et al., 2017).  
538

539 The mussel exposure to contaminated environment is frequently associated to an augmented  
540 permeability of the lysosomal membrane and an overall lysosomal swelling. In the present study,  
541 mussels deployed into S3, S5 and S6 showed a significantly higher LYS/CYT compared to the control  
542 site S7 (Fig. 4D), following trends significantly correlated to tissue levels of Ba, Mn and Zr (Fig. 5).  
543 The S3 and S5 were located in proximity of streams ensuring the flowing of industrial wastewater  
544 from southern and eastern settlements to the Adriatic Sea, while S6 was located along a channel  
545 that receive water from Lamone river after having crossed the natural areas located to the west (Fig.  
546 1); thus, these data outline the need for a better understanding of the spatial/temporal relationships  
547 between different source of lagoon water (industrial and continental), metal release into the  
548 environment and lysosomal dysfunction in the exposed biota.  
549

550 Lysosomal biomarker of general stress, as LMS and LYS/CYT, describe the overall health status  
551 of tested organisms and may thus be modulated by a wide range of natural/anthropogenic stressors;  
552 therefore, considering the diverse array of human activities directly and indirectly linked to the  
553 Pialassa Baiona lagoon, it cannot be ruled out that further organic pollutants may have played a role  
554 in observed lysosomal responses.  
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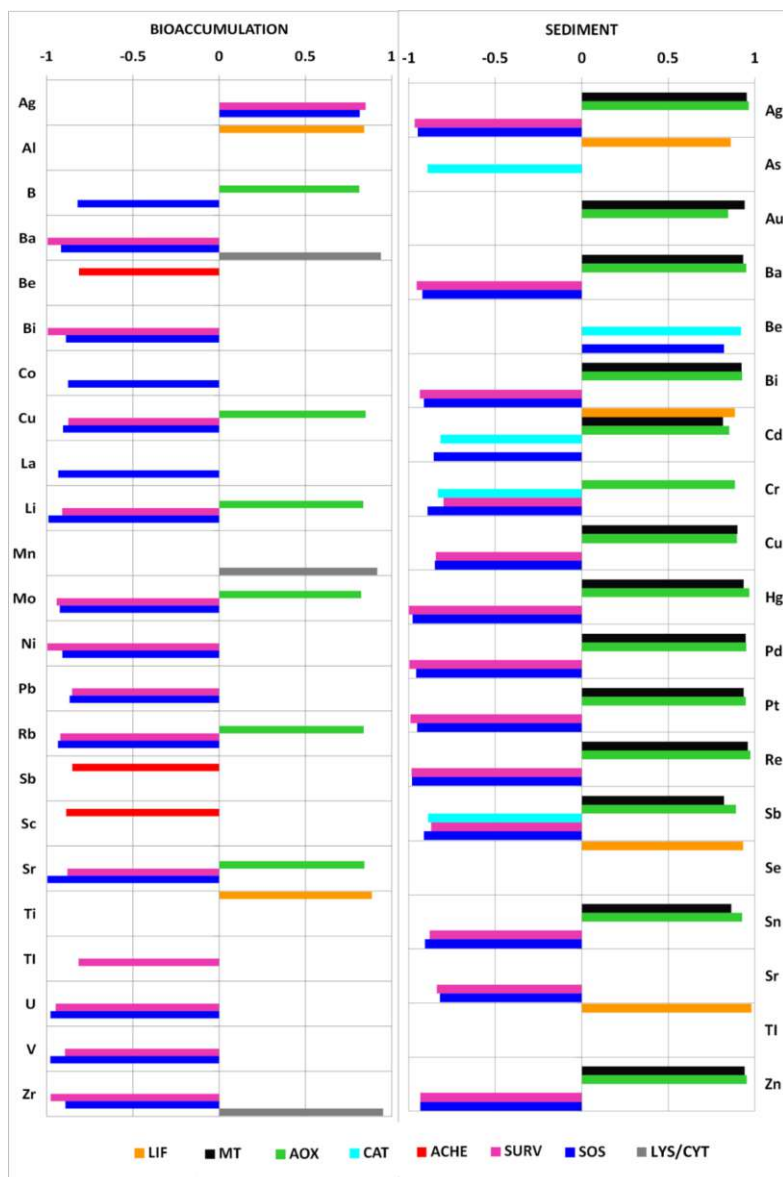


Figure 5. Correlation between biological data and metal concentrations. Pearson's coefficients calculated between biological data and levels of metals measured in mussel tissues (bioaccumulation) and sediment. Only coefficients showing a significant correlation ( $p < 0.05$ ) are reported in the figure.

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Mussels from all sites, except S2, showed a significant accumulation of LIF compared to those deployed into the reference site (S7) (Fig. 4E). LIF represent the ultimate products of the lipid peroxidation of biological membranes; they are composed by oxidatively modified proteins, lipid degradation by-products, carbohydrates and metals, and appear as granules within lysosomes of cells composing the digestive tubules epithelium (Moore et al., 2008). Previous biomonitoring studies highlighted clear relationships between LIF accumulation in mussels, the metal uptake and the metal spatial/temporal distribution into enclosed marine systems as bays and lagoons (Moschino et al., 2011; Capolupo et al., 2017). Accordingly, we identified significant and positive correlations between LIF, Al and Ti tissue content in mussels, as well as with As, Cd, Se and TI measured in sediments (Fig. 5). In addition, a significant and negative correlation has been observed between LIF and the activity of the antioxidant enzyme CAT (Table S3). The latter showed a significant decrease *versus* control (S7) in mussels exposed at S1 (Fig. 4F), suggesting that beside ROS formation, the exposure to relatively high metal concentrations might also down-regulate the overall mussel antioxidant defences. CAT also showed negative correlation with elements previously found to elicit pro-oxidant effects in mussels, as As, Cd, Cr, Sb (Franzellitti et al., 2012; Benali et al., 2017; Coppola et al., 2018), and with temperature trends within the lagoon. This indicates that both chemical and physical factors might have cumulatively influenced the mussel ROS scavenging activity over the exposure within the lagoon.

MT have been used as biomarker of exposure in this study owing to their high heavy-metal-binding capacity (Lavradas et al., 2016). Compared to control site S7, a significant MT synthesis induction has been recorded in the digestive gland of mussels from S3 and S1 (Fig. 4H), both located in the southern part of the lagoon in proximity of a large industrial complex (Fig.1). MT trends showed a positive and significant correlation with the sediment concentration of metals known as MT up-regulator, including Cd, Cu, Zn, Pd, Pt, Sn and Hg (Viarengo et al., 2001; Rocha et al., 2016; Zimmermann and Sures, 2018), and other less studied such as Ag, Au, Ba, Bi, Re, and Sb (Fig. 5). Positive relationships were detected MT trends and fluctuations of temperature and conductivity (Table S3), indicating that physico-chemical factors may interactively modulate MT in mussels from contaminated areas.

The activity of the enzyme AChE, which mediates the termination of the nervous impulses driven by the neurotransmitter acetylcholine, was significantly inhibited in mussels from the northern site S6 (Fig. 4H). AChE is typically inhibited by pesticides, although in mussels it may also be inhibited by high levels of metals (Lionetto et al., 2003). Apart from a negative relationship with

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Be, AChE trends did not show significant relationships with metals measured in sediments and mussel tissues (Fig. 5), nor with other biological endpoints measured in deployed mussels (Table S3). Compared to the S7, sediments collected in S6 showed a 20 times higher enrichment of Hg (Fig. 2), which is known as a potent AChE inhibitor in mussels, notably when co-exposed to fluctuations of other physico-chemical parameters, such as temperature (Coppola et al., 2017).

The possible impact of organic xenobiotics on the physiology of transplanted mussels has been screened through the analysis of the Acyl-Co A oxidase (AOX) activity. *In situ* deployed mussels showed a significant AOX increase following exposure at all sites except S2 (Fig. 4I). These data corroborate previous evidence of a diffuse PAH contamination (notably pyrene, fluoranthene and anthracene) in sediment and mussels collected from the same area (Vassura et al., 2005; Fabbri et al., 2006). Vassura et al. (2005) also found clear relationships between patterns of PAHs and Hg in the lagoon sediments. Accordingly, many metals herein measured in sediments, including among others Ag, Ba; Hg, Cu, Cr, Cd and Zn, as well as mussel tissues concentrations of B, Cu, Li, Mo and Sr showed positive correlation with AOX (Fig. 5), suggesting a possible metal-induced peroxisome proliferation and a similar spatial distribution of metals and POPs within the lagoon.

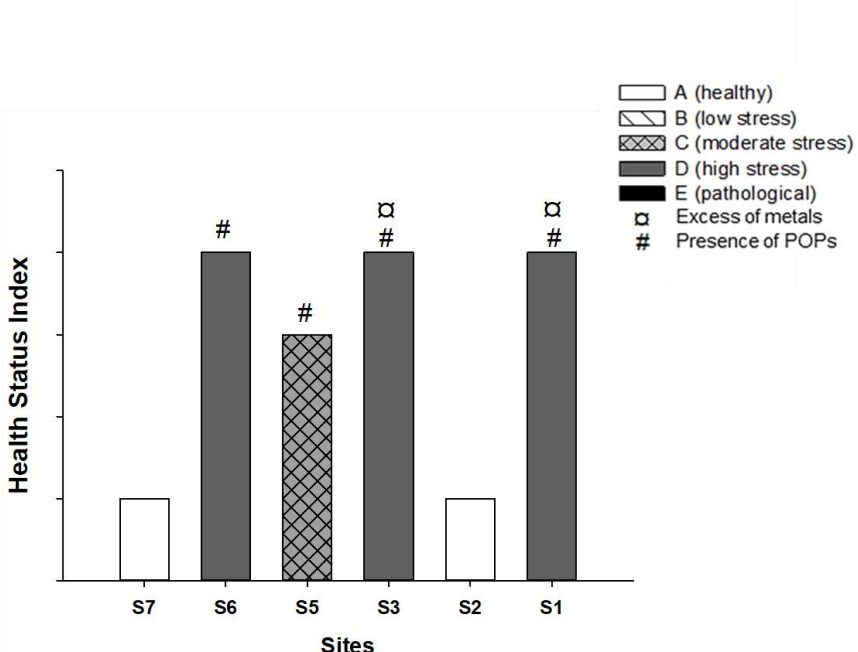
The output produced by biomarkers data integration performed through the MES is reported in Figure 6. The LMS was chosen as guide parameter for the data integration. A good health status (HSI = A) was assigned by the Expert System to mussels *in situ* exposed at the reference site S7 and at S2. This output confirms the good environmental quality of the lagoon north-eastern area, as previously identified based on chemical and biological evidence (Franzellitti et al., 2010), and is in line with the lack of biomarker alterations observed in mussels from S2. Although this site is located in the southern part of the lagoon, i.e. in proximity of industrial settlements, it is directly exposed to the marine water entering the lagoon indicating the relevance of high water circulation and oxygenation to the fitness of the resilient biota. A moderate stress level (HSI = C) was assigned to mussels exposed at S5, while mussels from S1, S3 and S6 were classified as heavily stressed (HSI = D) (Fig. 6). In line with the metal contamination/bioaccumulation and coherently with MT levels measured in mussels, ~~the MES associated the health status alteration to a significant excess of metal contamination~~ was identified in S1 and S3. Moreover, the MES associated the health status alteration of mussels exposed at S1, S3, S5 and S6 to the presence of organic xenobiotics/persistent organic compounds (POPs) has been identified in S1, S3, S5 and S6, in line with measured AOX trends. Although organics were not included in the analytical design of this study, this output is consistent with previous ~~and~~ evidence of PCB and PAH contamination across the

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lagoon reported in previous studies (Guerra, 2012; Vassura et al., 2005; Fabbri et al., 2006; Vassura et al., 2005) and may confirm the co-occurrence of multiple stressors in different areas of the Pialassa Baiona lagoon-



**Figure 6. Biomarker data integration.** A unique Health status index (HSI) has been generated using the Mussel Expert System (MES, developed by Dagnino et al., 2007) based on biomarker alterations observed at each site. The LMS was chosen as guide parameter for the HSI assessment.

**4 Conclusions**

The integrated approach implemented in this study provided accurate and reliable clues on the distribution of metals in the Pialassa Baiona lagoon, their bioavailability for exposed mussels and their effects on key biological functions, posing also attention to seldom considered elements such as Ag and Sb.

The physico-chemical data revealed clear differences among S1 and other investigated sites. The water in Magni Channel (S1) showed higher column temperature, reduced EC and a lower pH

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640 value, for the entire monitoring period generating local conditions aligned with the worst forecasted  
641 climate change scenarios.

642 The geochemical analysis of total elements indicated that sediments in Pialassa Baiona are a  
643 mixture of carbonate and silicates with variable amount of organic matter. The total concentrations  
644 of the investigated elements are within the range of regional background. Exception is made for Zn  
645 and Cu, and Pb respectively double (in S1) and slightly above (S3 and S5) the local natural  
646 background values.

647 The aqua regia digestion identified a south-north decreasing contamination trend, with  
648 highest enrichments of Hg, Pt, Au, Ag, Mo, Re, Cd, Pd, Zn; Sn, and Cu (in enrichment order, Fig. 2)  
649 being at least two folds enriched than S7 (internal control). Moreover, the most affected sites are  
650 in the south-western areas, which consistently receives wastewater effluents from a near  
651 petrochemical settlement (south) and drainage water from the inland (west).

652 Bioaccumulation analysis performed in transplanted mussels proved suitable to evaluate the  
653 bioavailability of metals in relation to their distribution across the lagoon. Integrating physical,  
654 chemical and biological measures allowed for defining causal relationships between observed  
655 mortality rates, lysosomal dysfunctions, oxidative stress induction, biomarker of exposure  
656 modulations and the metal distribution within the lagoon. Besides this, the different channels  
657 examined within the lagoon proved to be an excellent study system for evaluating climate change  
658 effects (i.e. modified temperature, pH, and salinity) combined with pollution. In addition, the use of  
659 the MES proved suitable to identify the impact induced by specific substances on the overall mussel  
660 fitness and to estimate the toxicological pathways occurring in highly pressure lagoons.

661 Overall, data from this study assign a general scarce environmental quality to the Pialassa  
662 Baiona lagoon; considering the heterogeneity of this area in terms of geological, physico-chemical  
663 and anthropogenic factors, regular biomonitoring surveys should be performed to control the onset  
664 of conditions which might exacerbate the impact of metals and other pollutants, notably on a  
665 seasonal timeframe. In this respect, the integrated strategy undertaken in this investigation  
666 represents a promising approach for the biomonitoring of this area and, more generally, for reliably  
667 assessing the environmental quality of highly pressured lagoons.

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## Acknowledgement

The Authors are grateful to Municipality of Ravenna for supporting the work and allowing field activity within the Piallassa Baiona lagoon. Furthermore, the Authors thank the anonymous Reviewers who helped in improving the quality of the article.

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## Tables of the paper:

# Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring

### Authors:

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**Table 1. Results of the chemical analyses on sediments. The table includes either pseudo total Aqua Regia (AR) and total XRF data. Table includes also the ranges observed in boreholes in the area, considered representative of the natural background (Amorosi et al., 2002; Curzi et al., 2006). Bold elements exceed natural background. AR DL indicates Detection Limit for Aqua Regia extraction.**

		S1		S2		S3		S4		S5		S6		S7		Natural background	
		AR DL	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	AR	XRF	
<b>Ag</b>	µg/kg	2	991	-	269	-	268	-	173	-	275	-	179	-	62	-	-
<b>Al</b>	%	0.01	1.39	6.31	1.41	7.02	1.23	6.98	1.10	6.97	1.35	7.09	1.39	7.07	1.41	6.55	4.4-9.7
<b>As</b>	mg/kg	0.1	7.8	-	5.9	-	6.1	-	5.9	-	7.8	-	6.8	-	6.7	-	-
<b>Au</b>	µg/kg	0.2	16.2	-	5.4	-	11.1	-	2.6	-	5.1	-	3.4	-	1	-	-
<b>B</b>	mg/kg	1	25	-	28	-	26	-	24	-	38	-	33	-	22	-	-
<b>Ba</b>	mg/kg	0.5	61.9	263	43.7	218	41.8	260	42.6	322	40.1	258	38.7	294	36.5	258	220-530
<b>Be</b>	mg/kg	0.1	0.4	-	0.7	-	0.7	-	0.8	-	0.5	-	0.6	-	0.6	-	-
<b>Bi</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.6	-	0.38	-	0.35	-	0.26	-	0.38	-	0.31	-	0.28	-	-
<b>Ca</b>	%	0.01	11.27	11.37	7.45	7.51	7.87	7.96	7.34	7.87	6.10	6.65	7.24	7.43	8.61	9.52	0.3-17.2
<b>Cd</b>	mg/kg	0.01	0.68	-	0.29	-	0.33	-	0.21	-	0.5	-	0.35	-	0.11	-	-
<b>Ce</b>	mg/kg	0.1	19.4	42	17	55	17.6	71	16.8	52	17.8	64	18.3	42	20.1	58	14-83
<b>Co</b>	mg/kg	0.1	10.2	12	10.9	11	10.7	12	9.9	11	11.7	14	11.5	12	10.6	11	5-29
<b>Cr</b>	mg/kg	0.5	70.6	131	57.5	103	51.4	132	47.7	131	59.9	138	59.3	130	47	100	96-270
<b>Cs</b>	mg/kg	0.02	1.36	-	1.15	-	1.08	-	1.16	-	1.11	-	1.39	-	1.57	-	-
<b>Cu</b>	mg/kg	<b>0.01</b>	<b>84.1</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51.1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4-41</b>
<b>Fe</b>	%	0.01	2.17	3.42	2.46	3.92	2.23	3.86	2.00	3.69	2.54	3.83	2.30	3.64	2.36	3.72	2.1-5.3
<b>Ga</b>	mg/kg	0.1	4.4	-	4.2	-	4	-	3.9	-	4	-	4.2	-	4.4	-	-
<b>Ge</b>	mg/kg	0.1	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	<0.1	-	-
<b>Hf</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.04	-	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.05	-	-
<b>Hg</b>	mg/kg	0.005	25.7	-	1.42	-	1.48	-	1.89	-	2.38	-	2.26	-	0.1	-	-
<b>In</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.03	-	0.03	-	0.02	-	0.02	-	0.03	-	0.02	-	0.03	-	-
<b>K</b>	%	0.01	0.33	1.77	0.36	1.98	0.31	2.06	0.28	2.04	0.39	1.97	0.36	2.04	0.35	2.03	0.9-3.3
<b>La</b>	mg/kg	0.5	8.3	19	7.7	26	7.3	22	6.9	18	8	20	8.5	34	9.5	20	17-47
<b>Li</b>	mg/kg	0.1	26.1	-	30.6	-	27.8	-	24.9	-	28.7	-	28	-	28.1	-	-
<b>Mg</b>	%	0.01	1.37	2.41	1.34	2.38	1.30	2.38	1.22	2.44	1.42	2.54	1.55	2.55	1.58	2.35	2.2-4.2
<b>Mn</b>	mg/kg	1	531	893	527	865	549	896	513	949	511	801	550	897	644	1396	230-1470
<b>Mo</b>	mg/kg	0.01	2.67	-	3.33	-	2.61	-	2.28	-	3.34	-	1.57	-	0.54	-	-
<b>Na</b>	%	0.001	0.85	0.68	0.98	0.69	0.90	0.75	0.65	0.99	1.18	0.67	0.85	0.78	0.42	0.85	0.5-2.1
<b>Nb</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.37	15	0.28	13	0.25	13	0.29	14	0.34	16	0.37	10	0.29	13	8-20
<b>Ni</b>	mg/kg	0.1	50.9	73	56.5	73	50.7	88	46.3	72	55.3	82	51.5	74	46.4	57	39-148
<b>P</b>	%	0.001	0.11	0.10	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.03-0.08
<b>Pb</b>	mg/kg	<b>0.01</b>	<b>27.92</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22.71</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22.14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18.16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26.22</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20.71</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11.99</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5-29</b>
<b>Pd</b>	µg/kg	10	46	-	10	-	12	-	11	-	10	-	<10	-	<10	-	-
<b>Pt</b>	µg/kg	2	37	-	6	-	4	-	4	-	4	-	<2	-	<2	-	-
<b>Rb</b>	mg/kg	0.1	24.9	113	22.2	128	20.8	128	22.4	113	22.3	130	25.1	114	29.8	89	56-200
<b>Re</b>	µg/kg	1	7	-	1	-	2	-	<1	-	2	-	2	-	<1	-	-
<b>S</b>	%	0.02	0.6	-	0.55	-	0.6	-	0.54	-	0.72	-	0.71	-	0.34	-	-
<b>Sb</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.51	-	0.29	-	0.25	-	0.19	-	0.37	-	0.29	-	0.19	-	-
<b>Sc</b>	mg/kg	0.1	3.4	11	3.6	11	3.4	6	3.2	8	3.7	10	3.7	8	4.1	13	12-21
<b>Se</b>	mg/kg	0.1	0.9	-	0.7	-	0.7	-	0.5	-	1.1	-	0.7	-	0.5	-	-
<b>Si</b>	%	-	-	17.72	-	19.43	-	19.90	-	20.61	-	19.31	-	20.95	-	20.03	14.7-29.3
<b>Sn</b>	mg/kg	0.1	3.2	-	1.8	-	1.5	-	1.3	-	1.9	-	1.5	-	0.8	-	-
<b>Sr</b>	mg/kg	0.5	353	368	274.4	300	224.8	252	218	265	259.1	281	281.6	291	290.5	310	113-442
<b>Th</b>	mg/kg	0.1	3.5	4	4.1	5	3.6	17	3.6	25	4	11	4.2	10	4.7	7	<3-19
<b>Ti</b>	%	0.001	0.009	0.308	0.005	0.328	0.006	0.347	0.008	0.349	0.006	0.324	0.010	0.334	0.015	0.336	0.02-0.58
<b>Tl</b>	mg/kg	0.02	0.26	-	0.17	-	0.21	-	0.19	-	0.27	-	0.2	-	0.14	-	-
<b>U</b>	mg/kg	0.1	1.3	-	1.5	-	1.2	-	1.1	-	1.3	-	1.2	-	1.1	-	-
<b>V</b>	mg/kg	2	32	85	33	85	30	99	26	94	35	113	33	94	31	76	54-169
<b>Y</b>	mg/kg	0.01	10.02	18	9.39	23	9.28	24	8.86	20	9.7	24	9.63	19	10.58	19	18-43
<b>Zn</b>	mg/kg	<b>0.1</b>	<b>306.6</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>129.8</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>133.1</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>101.2</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>146.9</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>109.3</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>58.2</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43-124</b>
<b>Zr</b>	mg/kg	0.1	1.1	108	1.2	91	1	105	1	124	1.1	86	1.2	92	1.9	106	76-260
<b>H<sub>2</sub>O<sup>-</sup></b>	%	-	-	2.7	-	4.0	-	2.8	-	2.4	-	3.7	-	2.7	-	2.1	-
<b>OM</b>	%	-	-	2.8	-	1.8	-	2.0	-	1.7	-	3.4	-	2.2	-	1.1	-
<b>H<sub>2</sub>O<sup>+</sup></b>	%	-	-	6.0	-	6.5	-	5.4	-	4.4	-	6.5	-	5.8	-	2.3	-
<b>CO<sub>2</sub></b>	%	-	-	11.6	-	8.9	-	9.1	-	9.3	-	8.6	-	7.4	-	12.3	-
<b>LOI</b>	%	-	-	23.1	-	21.2	-	19.3	-	17.8	-	22.3	-	18.1	-	17.8	4.8-29.3

**Table 2. Results of the chemical analyses on mussel tissues (bioaccumulation). Data refers to T0 and to the 5 sites were mussels survived or remained after the exposure period.**

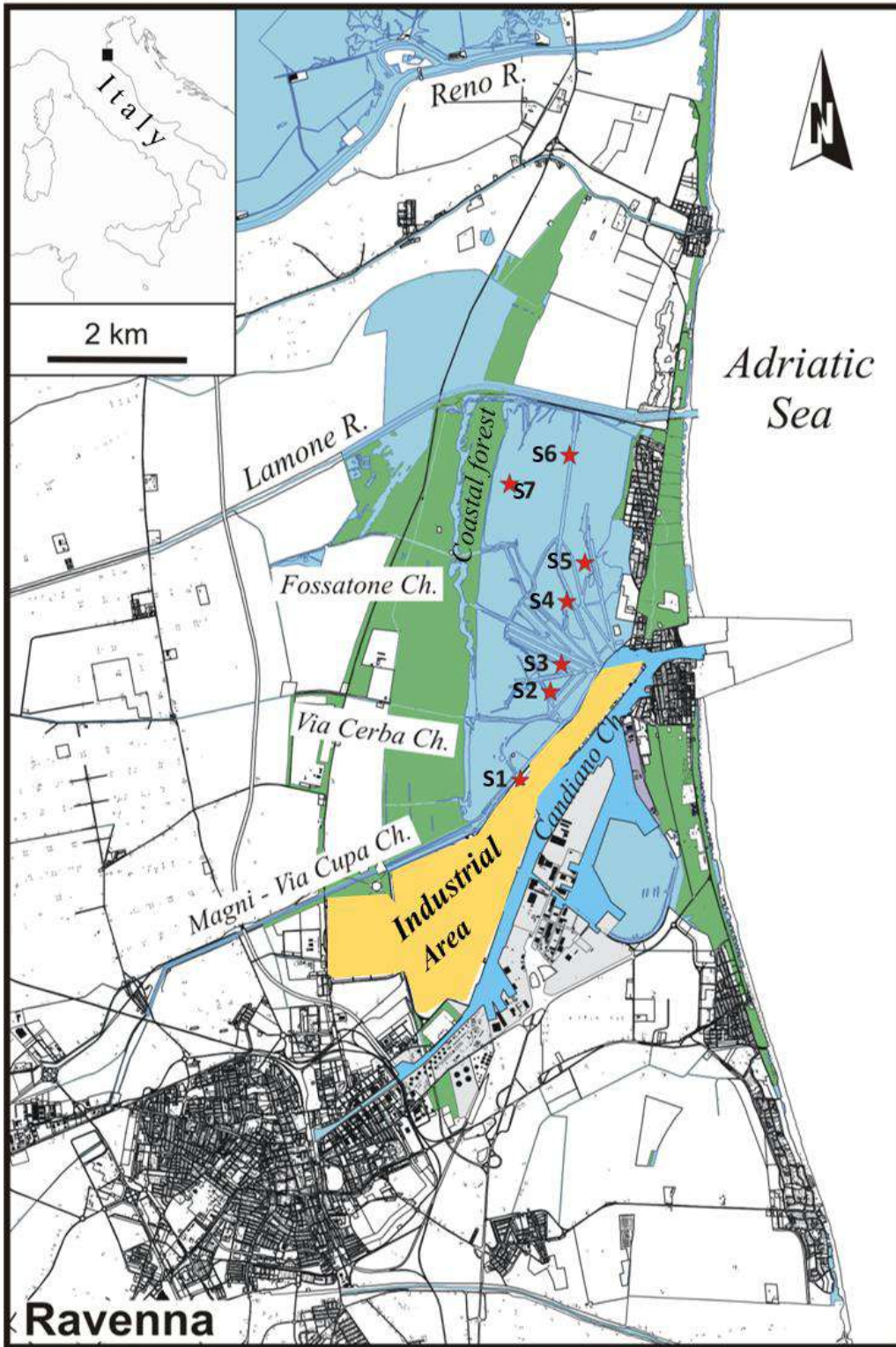
	unit	T0	S2	S3	S5	S6	S7
Ag	mg/kg	0.12	0.99	0.98	1.21	0.62	0.82
Al	mg/kg	36	39	56	98	82	47
As	mg/kg	9.83	12.8	9.98	11.9	12.4	11.4
B	mg/kg	25.7	22.9	19.7	22.8	25.9	19.4
Ba	mg/kg	1.95	0.35	0.49	0.54	0.52	0.36
Be	mg/kg	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.006	0.004
Bi	mg/kg	0.057	0.009	0.009	0.007	0.011	0.008
Ca	mg/kg	2004	1322	1299	1726	1679	1157
Cd	mg/kg	0.70	0.71	0.78	0.76	0.77	0.50
Ce	mg/kg	0.118	0.051	0.092	0.124	0.166	0.075
Co	mg/kg	0.54	0.323	0.3	0.303	0.511	0.315
Cr	mg/kg	0.57	0.6	0.53	0.67	0.53	0.64
Cs	mg/kg	0.022	0.014	0.016	0.022	0.019	0.015
Cu	mg/kg	4.65	2.71	2.63	2.81	2.66	1.46
Fe	mg/kg	67.5	68.1	77.4	116.0	103.4	91.7
Ga	mg/kg	0.018	0.007	0.011	0.019	0.013	0.009
Hg	mg/kg	0.082	0.35	0.32	0.41	0.27	0.16
K	mg/kg	11084	10988	9729	11129	11244	9535
La	mg/kg	0.138	0.035	0.057	0.074	0.109	0.06
Li	mg/kg	0.88	0.46	0.41	0.51	0.58	0.34
Mg	mg/kg	4198	3851	3467	3676	4422	2506
Mn	mg/kg	4.84	5.19	7.50	8.16	8.03	5.03
Mo	mg/kg	0.645	0.353	0.368	0.317	0.394	0.274
Na	mg/kg	22885	20201	15986	19714	24751	13438
Nb	mg/kg	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.003	0.002
Ni	mg/kg	3.61	0.72	0.69	0.73	0.92	0.64
Pb	mg/kg	1.41	0.87	0.52	0.57	0.94	0.64
Rb	mg/kg	5.29	4.08	4.32	4.27	4.3	3.78
Sb	mg/kg	0.018	0.038	0.031	0.03	0.048	0.039
Sc	mg/kg	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.04
Se	mg/kg	2.27	2.10	2.10	2.01	1.83	1.52
Sn	mg/kg	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.10	0.09	0.08
Sr	mg/kg	31.2	17.7	16.5	20.6	22.8	14.3
Th	mg/kg	0.019	0.011	0.014	0.025	0.031	0.016
Ti	mg/kg	0.49	0.34	0.62	1.07	0.88	0.50
Tl	mg/kg	0.003	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.001
U	mg/kg	0.127	0.049	0.040	0.054	0.065	0.032
V	mg/kg	1.15	0.44	0.49	0.55	0.80	0.47
Y	mg/kg	0.080	0.046	0.071	0.085	0.094	0.04
Zn	mg/kg	107.1	116	62.4	95.6	134	86.9
Zr	mg/kg	0.064	0.013	0.025	0.025	0.021	0.018

## Figures of the paper:

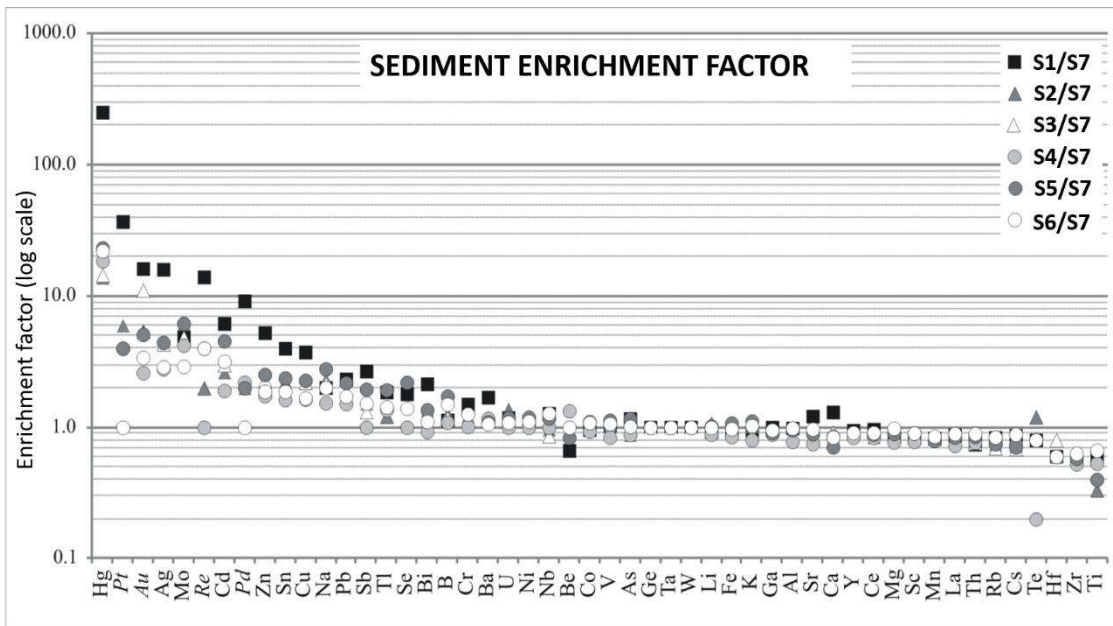
# Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring

### Authors:

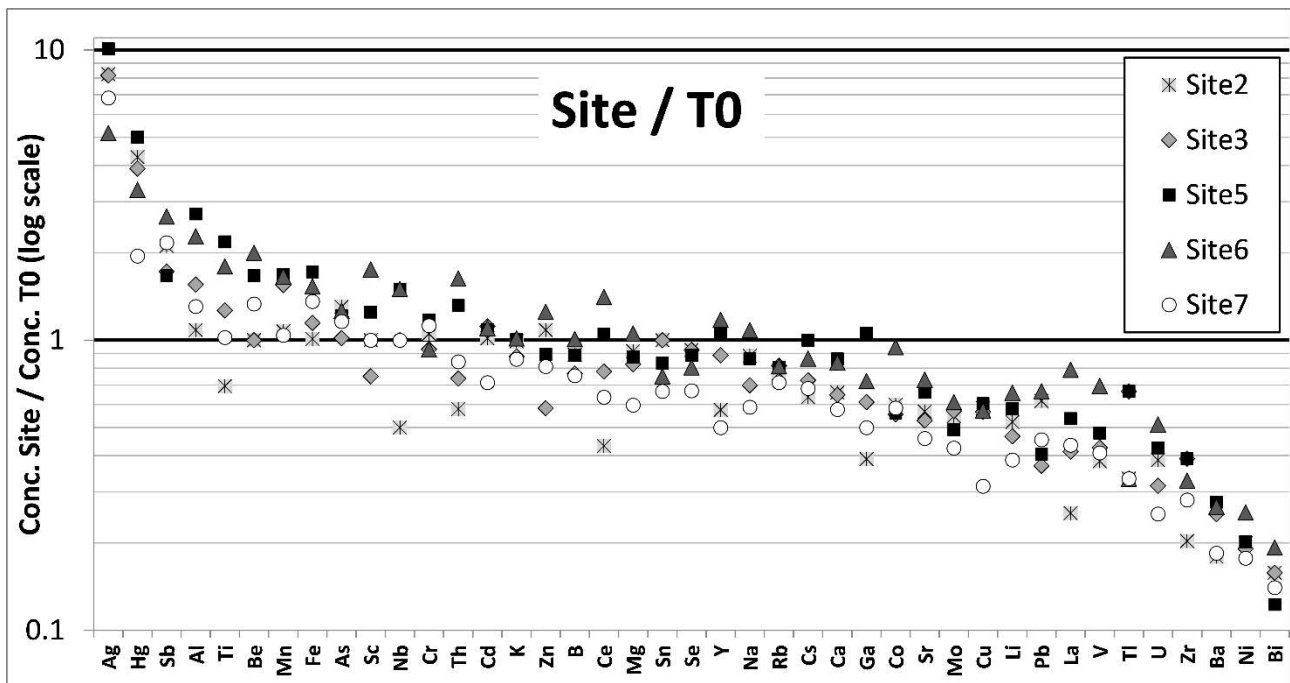
Greggio Nicolas\*, Capolupo Marco, Filippo Donnini, Manfred Birke, Fabbri Elena, Dinelli Enrico



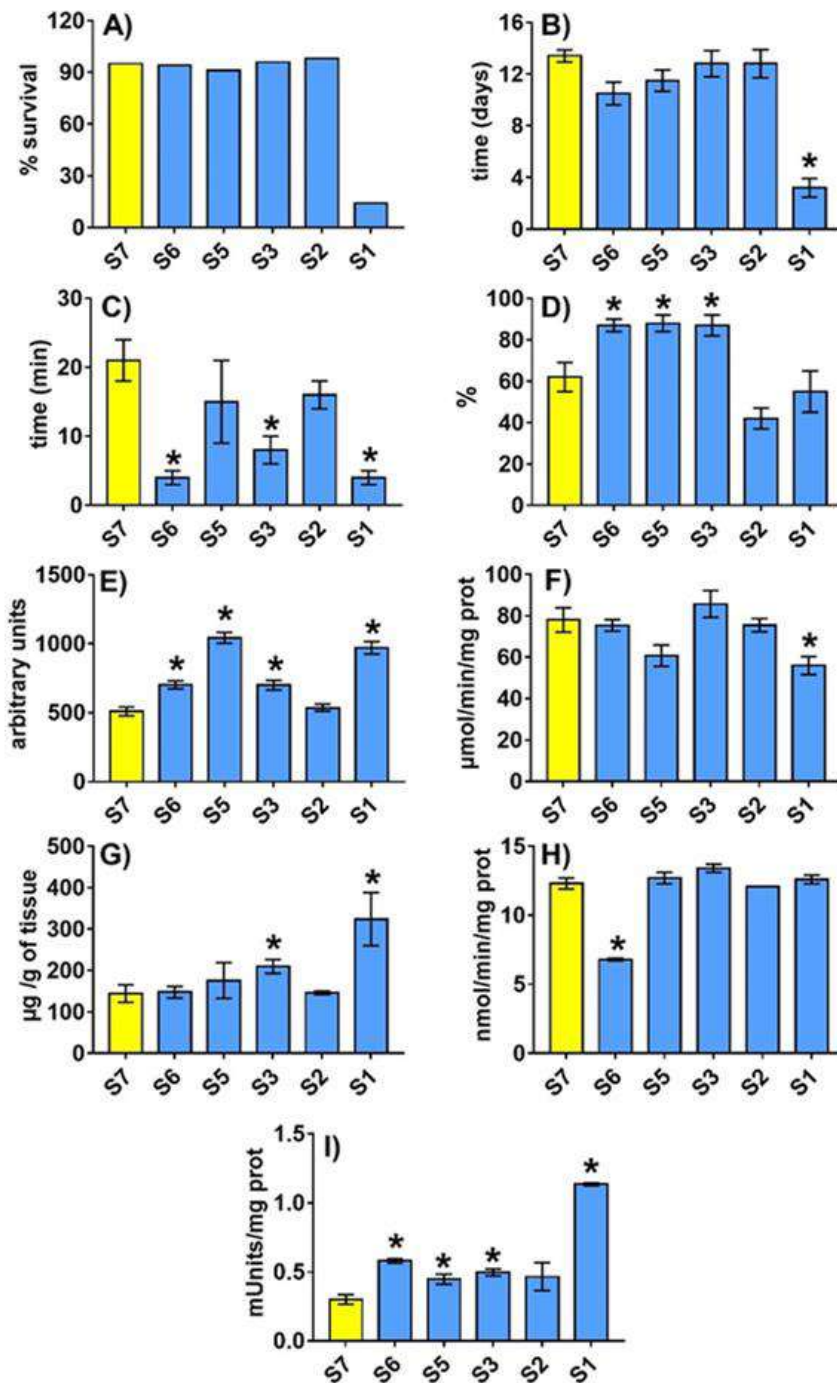
**Figure 1. Location map and sampling points (S1 to S7) within the Pialassa Baiona lagoon (Ravenna, Italy).** The abbreviations “R.” and “Ch.” refer to the main rivers and/or channels which supply freshwater to the lagoon. The yellow shape represents the industrial area settled at the south-eastern boundary of the Pialassa Baiona lagoon.



**Figure 2. Metal enrichment in sediments from selected sites within the Pialassa Baiona lagoon.** Data are normalized on Site 7 (S7), which was selected as internal reference based on previous literature (Trombini et al., 2003; Fabbri et al., 2006; Donnini et al., 2007; Franzellitti et al., 2010). Elements in italics (*Pt*, *Au*, *Re*, *Pd*) were not investigated in the mussel tissues.

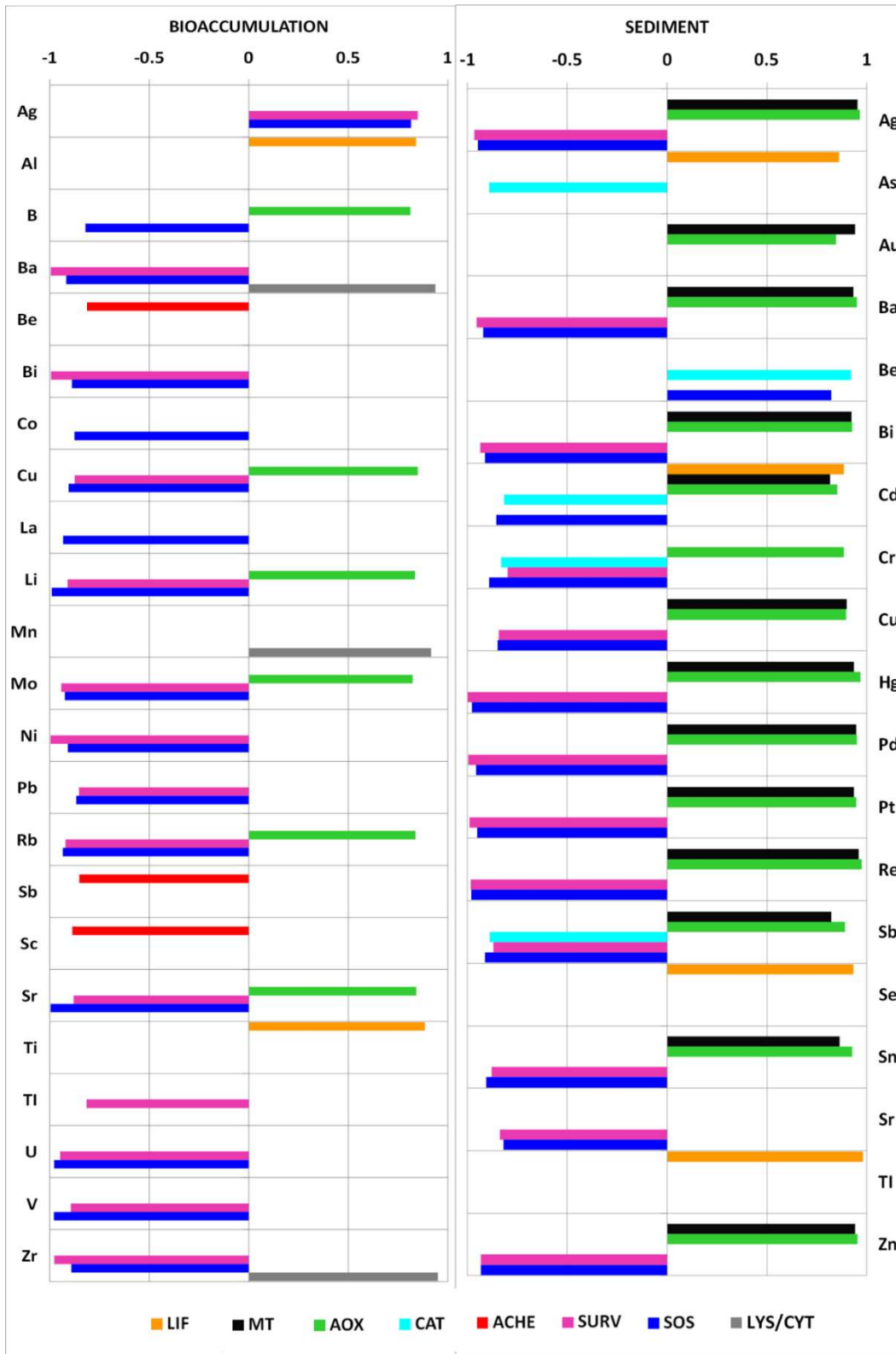


**Figure 3. Bioaccumulation factor of metals in mussel tissues.** The analysis has been performed on the tissue of mussels deployed for 30 days into different sites of the Pialassa Baiona lagoon compared to mussels analysed before the *in situ* deployment (T0). Elements are ranked according to average enrichment.

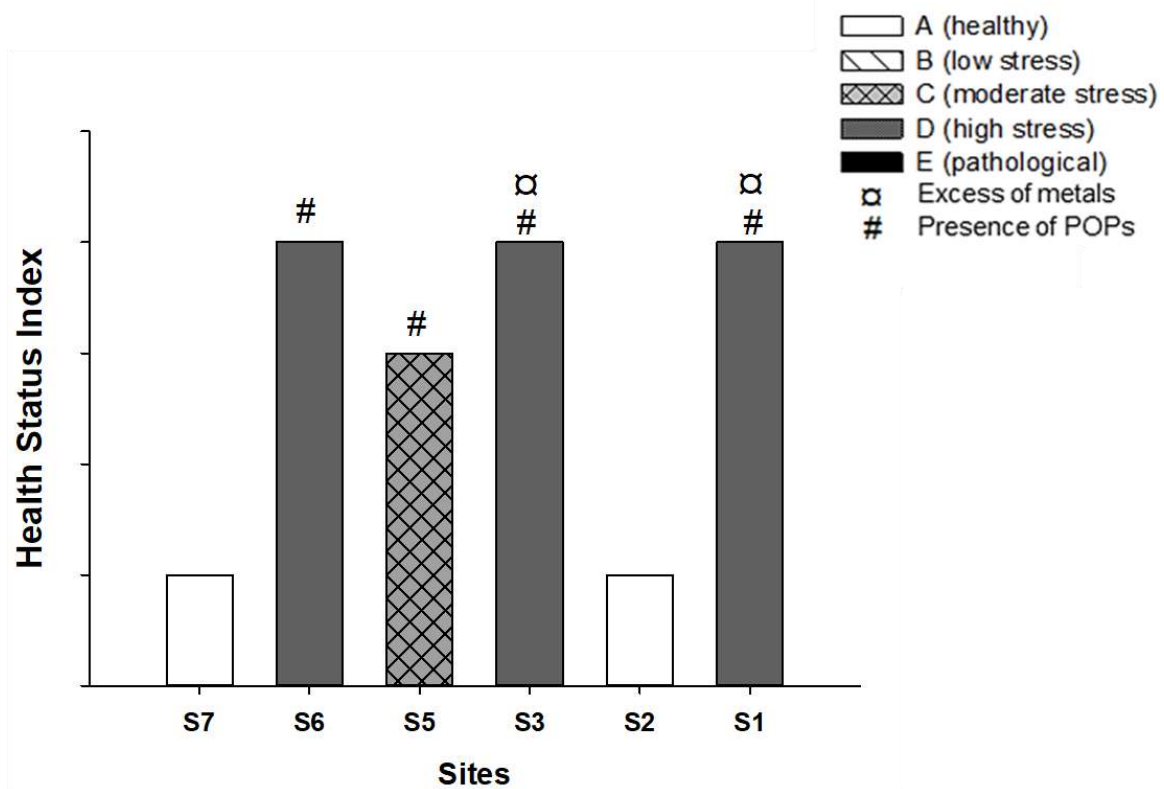


**Figure 4. Biomarker modulation in mussels transplanted into the Pialassa Baiona lagoon.** Data from all sites (mean  $\pm$  SEM) have been measured in mussels collected after 30 days of exposure, except for S1, referred to mussels collected after 3 days of exposure due to high mortality. A, survival (SURV); B, Stress on stress (SOS); C, lysosomal membrane stability (LMS); D, lysosome to cytoplasm volume ratio; E, lipofuscin (LIF), F, catalase activity (CAT); G, metallothionein content (MT); H, acetylcholinesterase activity (ACHE); I, peroxisomal acyl-CoA oxidase (AOX). Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences compared to the control site S7 (One-Way ANOVA, Duncan's post-hoc test).





**Figure 5. Correlation between biological data and metal concentrations.** Pearson's coefficients calculated between biological data and levels of metals measured in mussel tissues (bioaccumulation) and sediment. Only coefficients showing a significant correlation ( $p < 0.05$ ) are reported in the figure.



**Figure 6. Biomarker data integration.** A unique Health status index (HSI) has been generated using the Mussel Expert System (MES, developed by Dagnino et al., 2007) based on biomarker alterations observed at each site. The LMS was chosen as guide parameter for the HSI assessment.



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**Supplementary Data**

Revised Supplementary Material Greggio et al.  
2020.docx

**Declaration of interests**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

The authors declare the following financial interests/personal relationships which may be considered as potential competing interests:

## **TITLE: Integration of physical, geochemical and biological analyses as a strategy for coastal lagoon biomonitoring**

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