Variability of the Eastern and Western Mediterranean Circulation and Thermohaline Properties: Similarities and Differences

(on the occasion of 25 years of the project Physical Oceanography of the Eastern Mediterranean - POEM)

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The program Physical Oceanography of the Eastern Mediterranean (POEM) ended in 1995. During POEM several important aspects of the eastern Mediterranean oceanography were discovered, but new and interesting issues were arisen. Specifically, among many others: is the Eastern Mediterranean Transient an episode or a state of a sequence that, somehow periodically, modifies the deep convection cell of the eastern Mediterranean? Do changes in the deep eastern Mediterranean circulation influence the circulation of the western Mediterranean and, in case they do, how these changes modify the temporal and spatial scales of the Mediterranean dynamics? Which is the role of the Ionian circulation in the redistribution of water masses to adjacent basins and, thus, can changes in the Ionian circulation modify the thermohaline properties of water masses formed in these basins?

No organic program dealing with the oceanography of the eastern Mediterranean was promoted since the end of POEM, but many colleagues were involved, directly or indirectly, with the above mentioned issues. It is objective of this workshop to fix the status of the present research about the Mediterranean and allow scientists to meet each other and eventually promote organic research programs in this area.