

**A REPORT ON THE INFORMAL MEETING
“NOTIZIE DAL FRONTE” (NEWS FROM THE “FRONTE”)
HELD AT THE DEPARTMENT OF EARTH SCIENCES IN BOLOGNA
MAY 7, 2012**

**Alessandra Negri¹, Gian Battista Vai², Alessandro Amorosi³, Fabrizio Antonioli⁴,
Adele Bertini⁵, Stefano Marabini⁶, Giuseppe Mastronuzzi⁷**

¹ Dipartimento di Scienze della Vita e dell'Ambiente, Università Politecnica delle Marche, Ancona, Italy

² Museo Geologico G. Capellini, Università degli Studi di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

³ Dipartimento di Scienze Biologiche, Geologiche e Ambientali, Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

⁴ ENEA Casaccia, Rome, Italy

⁵ Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra, Università Firenze, Italy

⁶ Via San Martino 1 Faenza, Italy

⁷ Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra e Geoambientali, Università di Bari, Italy

Corresponding author: A. Negri <a.negri@univpm.it>

ABSTRACT: Here we shortly report the result of an informal meeting held in Bologna under the auspices of AIQUA to promote the study of an Italian section near Taranto (Italy) showing interesting features and potentially useful as Upper Pleistocene GSSP.

Keywords: Tyrrhenian, Late Pleistocene, Italy.



Fig. 1 - Location of the "Fronte" section.



Fig. 2 - The "Fronte" section from the sea.

On May 7, 2012 the Associazione Italiana per lo Studio del Quaternario (AIQUA) and the Commissione Italiana di Stratigrafia (CIS), in coincidence with the Assembly of members and the Consiglio di Presidenza AIQUA, organized an informal meeting with the coordinators of the working group on the Fronte section (Taranto) (Fig 1,2) to discuss and verify the real potential of the section in the frame of the definition of the GSSP of the Middle/Upper Pleistocene (see for a preliminary description of this section Antonioli et al, 2008).

After a short introduction by the President of AIQUA (Paolo Mozzi) and the President of the Commissione Italiana di Stratigrafia (Marco Balini), several talks dealing with different geological and stratigraphical aspects have been presented by the actors involved in the study. Presentations discussed the potential of the Fronte section as GSSP for the Late Pleistocene by the use of different approaches. The principal aim was to show the recent developments of the ongoing research on this locality as well as to discuss problems and to compare opinions with specialists from different fields with direct experience at local/regional scale.

The first talk was dealing with the geological and geomorphological context of the Taranto area (G. Mastronuzzi). Afterward, F. Antonioli, clarified the sea level context during the sediment deposition. Passing to the ongoing study of the section, A. Negri recalled the story of the study and the main stratigraphical features of the section. To this presentation, it followed as a key study, that of A. Amorosi, dealing with the correlation to the section to the Po plain drillsites, which



Fig. Fig. 3 - A. Bertini, G.B Vai and S. Marabini sampling the "Galeso" lacustrine-marine section (Taranto, Italy).



Fig. 4 - G. Mastronuzzi digging a deep trench for sampling the upper part of the "Fronte" section (Taranto, Italy).

show continuous and thick sedimentary successions encompassing the last 125 kyr. The last contribution was by A. Bertini showing the results of a pilot palynological study involving both pollen and dinocysts which open new perspectives for the research.

The workshop was attended by about 40 participants, including nannofossil and forams micropaleontologists, palynologists, sedimentologists, sequence stratigraphers, isotope chemistry specialists, tephrochronology specialists, geomorphologists, vertebrate paleontologists.

One hour and half was dedicated to the presentation of the ongoing research and one hour and half was dedicated to the discussion focused on the doubt and the question posed by the scientific community on the different aspect of the data and the real correlability potential of the "Il Fronte" section at local/regional scale.

The initiative was really successful and based on the suggestion received two members of the working group on the "Il Fronte" section (A. Negri and A. Amorosì) presented the achieved results at the 34 IGC in Brisbane (August 2012), in the session dedicated to GSSP, Theme 35 Geostandards.

The presentations have been appreciated and we had a long talk with Martin Head who has been positively impressed in particular by the new data.

A new sampling of the Fronte section and the accessory Galeso section have been then performed in early September (Fig 3,4). Processing of the new samples have already started and we are confident to have results ready to be published for the current year 2013. Recently (February, 2013) we received an invitation to present our result at the incoming STRATI 2013 Congress to be held in Lisbon July 1-7, 2013 in the frame of the Session "The Quaternary System and its Formal Subdivision", conveners Martin Head (Can) / Philip Gibbard (UK) and Thijs van Kolfschoten (N).

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