**INTRODUCTION**

Off the coast of California and Baja California, giant kelp *Macrocystis pyrifera* forms dense forests. These kelp forests support high levels of species diversity and productivity, have provided valuable ecosystem services to human civilizations for millennia (1), but have had two very different histories:

- California, a long history of fishing pressure, long-term monitoring programs, and MPAs networks.
- Baja California, more recent large-scale fishing pressure, limited research monitoring programs and a lack of MPAs.

The timeline below and meta-analysis shows how over the past 100 years, research on kelp forests have changed.

**METHODS**

**Timeline**

A comprehensive list of historic events was created from:

1. A systematic literature review of peer-reviewed papers and influential works.
2. Google search looking at 6 combinations of 6 key-words/first 20 hits/search.
3. Experience-based selection criteria.

**Meta-analysis**

1. Web of Science, and a matrix with 15 searches combining 6 keywords (over 21 total keywords) commonly used in kelp forest literature.
2. 236 peer-reviewed papers were used to perform the analysis.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

- European observations of Californian kelp forests began with Cabrillo (3).
- Some kelp forests were mapped in the early 1900’s, when industrial harvesting began.
- Kelp forest research began in the 1940’s in California but only in the 1970’s in Baja California.
- There are 40 times more peer-reviewed papers on kelp forest topics, and 26 times more of study sites in California than in Baja California.
- Only 9 peer-reviewed papers include sites on both sides of the border, highlighting a scarcity of studies with a bi-national approach.
- Future bi-national collective actions will:
  - Improve the adaptive capacity of kelp forest management.
  - Likely increase conservation success when facing rising pressures on coastal ecosystems and human communities.

**TIMELINE**

The relevant events and publications that have had the most significant impact on the number and type of kelp first research works over the past 100 years.