

Paolo Antonio Pirazzoli (1939–2017)

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IN MEMORIAM



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Paolo Antonio Pirazzoli (1939–2017)



Paolo Pirazzoli was an associate editor of the *Journal of Coastal Research* since 1985, when the inaugural issue was published. He was a long-time friend who will be very much missed. The following are a sampling of comments about the man and his professional accomplishments. Above are some recent photos, arranged in a collage, of Paolo during his last fieldworks and research activities. He was active until the end, a wish probably held by most of us.

Paolo Antonio Pirazzoli was born in Venice (Italy) in 1939 and became a naturalized French citizen in 1979. Paolo had educational and professional backgrounds in civil engineering, coastal geomorphology, and physical geography. Perhaps most notably, he was the international leader of International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization–International Union of Geological Sciences Project 200 “Sea-Level Correlation and Applications” (from 1983 to 1987), which included more than 600 participants from 67 countries. Paolo also actively participated in several subsequent IGCP international research projects related to sea-level changes in the Quaternary.

Paolo was a partner in several European Commission (EC) research projects, including: “Investigation of Past and Future European Sea-Level Changes and their Impacts” (1987–90); “Climate Change, Sea-Level Rise and Associated Impacts in

Europe” (1991–93); and “Relative Sea-Level Changes and Extreme Flooding Events around European Coasts” (1993–95). He also took part in the EC project “Storminess and Environmentally Sensitive Atlantic Coastal Areas of the European Union” (1997–2000), in the interregional (U.K.–France) project “Beaches at Risk” (2003–05), and in several scientific cooperation programs between France and Greece (1990–91), France and Italy (1996–97 and 1999–2000), and France and Hong Kong (2001–03). In the late 1990s, Paolo participated in a working group of the City of Venice for an assessment of safeguard activities against flooding in the lagoon. More recently, he was an active partner in the French project related to near-future sea-level extremes “Discobole” (2004–07; <http://discobole.cetmef.equipement.gouv.fr/discobole>).

Paolo’s field experience includes geomorphological surveys in several countries around the Mediterranean area, the Pacific region (Japan, Taiwan, French Polynesia), Africa (Senegal, Mauritania, Kenya), and the Indian Ocean (Seychelles, Indonesia, Iran, French “Iles Eparses”).

He published several books and more than 250 professional papers in scientific journals. In addition to being an associate editor of the *Journal of Coastal Research* (published by the Coastal Education and Research Foundation), he served as the editor of *Global and Planetary Change* (Elsevier) since its foundation in 1989.

Beyond being an excellent scientist and accomplished researcher, Paolo was a wonderful colleague, teacher, and mentor. He loved his professional research activities and was active until the very last moment. His most recent (last) paper was published in September of 2017. He served science with pride, honesty, and dignity, as was his whole attitude towards life.

A few years ago, in the beginning of winter, for 10 continuous days, he went swimming and diving along the rocky coasts of the Euboean Gulf from sunset to sundown. He was there, always first, with a smile and a willingness to pass on his knowledge and experience. When he went back home, he had open-heart surgery. A few months later he was fearless, proud, tireless, in the central Aegean, swimming and diving in the middle of nowhere in the name of research!

Nothing could stop Paolo from accomplishing what he wanted, as he was truly dedicated to science. Paolo was a great teacher and a unique mentor to all those who came in contact with him. Paolo is now gone, but he will always be here in our hearts! Because of his high morals and inviting character, his amicable personality helped to shape the persona of many of his colleagues in a positive way. This remarkable attribute of Paolo's personality was reflected in his down to earth approach to life and work, so much so that all those who came in contact with this remarkable man appreciated his humility. In a word, Paolo was a beacon that showed the life, the way, and honor for many of us.

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