

Application of a digital pattern recognition system to



An image discrimination technique was developed to improve specific identification of some toxic *Dinophysis* cells (marine dinoflagellates involved in diarrhoeic shellfish poisoning), especially the "acuminata" and "sacculus" groups, which can be present at different ratios in natural sea-water samples collected during toxic episodes. This work was performed with image analysis software SAMBA (TITN Alcatel) using preserved cells directly observed through an inverted microscope and recorded with a video camera before further processing. All morphometric parameters used for discrimination of 7 different species or morphotypes of *Dinophysis* were tested with discriminant analysis. This study indicates that *Dinophysis* sp. and *D. pavillardi* seem well classified at the species level, whereas *D. cf. acuminata* and *D. sacculus* appear to be morphotypes of *D. acuminata*.

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