

# KRILL OR SALPS – THE ROLE OF CLIMATE CHANGES IN SHAPING ANTARCTIC TROPHIC FOOD WEB

## Summary

As a result of observed mass occurrence of gelatinous organisms in different regions of the world ocean, including polar regions, marine biologists focused in their studies on this group of animals. The article presents potential ecological and economic consequences of the phenomenon of mass occurrence of gelatinous organisms in various parts of the world. In the Southern Ocean the most likely reason for the rapid development of jellyfish or salps is climate change, in particular the warming effect. The

expected result of the mass occurrence of gelatinous zooplankton would be an alteration of the Antarctic pelagic food web, namely dominant existing herbivore – krill would be replaced by gelatinous salps, which are characterized by greater ecological flexibility. This phenomenon in the Southern Ocean region would have a negative impact on the functioning of top consumers – penguins, pinnipeds and cetaceans.