1 **TITLE:**

2 Leaf rolling as indicator of water stress in *Cistus incanus* from different provenances

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10 **ABSTRACT:**

11 The relationship between leaf rolling and physiological traits under imposed water stress conditions

12 was analyzed in *C. incanus* representative saplings collected at different altitudes (i.e.

13 Castelporziano, 41°45′N, 12°26′E, 0 m a.s.l. and Natural Park of Monti Lucretili, 42°33′N, 12°54′E,

14 750 m a.s.l) and grown *ex-situ.* The hypothesis that leaf rolling reflected physiological changes

15 occurring during water stress irrespective to the different acclimation to cope with water stress was

16 tested.

17 On the whole, the results show that leaf rolling is associated to an increased sub-stomatal CO_2

18 concentration (C_i) and a decreased carboxylation efficiency (C_e). Moreover, leaf rolling in *C.*

19 *incanus* leaves might be involved in protecting the PSII complex under water stress during the

20 progressive inhibition of photosynthetic metabolism.

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23 **KEY WORDS:**

24 apparent carboxylation efficiency, electron transport rate, leaf rolling, photosynthesis, substomatal

25 CO_2 concentration

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Introduction

Leaf movements are common adaptive responses to stress factors in plants (Kadioglu et al. 2012). Leaf movement affects physiological performance because of the influence of orientation on leaf energy balance (Gamon and Pearcy 1989). Various reports (Ehleringer and Forseth 1980; Forseth and Ehleringer 1982; Gamon and Pearcy 1989; Mooney and Ehleringer 1978) show that diaheliotropism maximizes carbon gain by increasing incident photosynthetic photon flux density (PPFD) or minimizes incident radiation, resulting in more favorable leaf temperatures and water status during drought. Moreover, according to Ludlow and Björkman (1984) paraheliotropism contributes to avoid leaf photoinhibition under drought stress. Among leaf movements leaf rolling is an hydronastic mechanism involved in plant responses to stress factors (Kadioglu et al. 2012) such as water stress (Kadioglu et al. 2012). There is evidence (Heckathorn and De Lucia, 1991; Kadioglu and Terzi 2007; Kadioglu et al. 2012; Nar et al. 2009) that under water stress conditions leaf rolling affects stomatal conductance and consequently photosynthesis. Nevertheless, how it occurs is not clear yet. Abd Allah (2009) highlighted that leaf rolling reduces leaf surface exposed to sun light energy causing stomata closure and limiting CO_2 uptake. On the contrary, O'Toole and Cruz (1980) found that partial leaf rolling in leaves with adaxial stomata increased stomatal conductance by providing a more favorable microenvironment such as a higher relative humidity. However, the contribution of leaf rolling on stomatal conductance under water stress depends on several factors including stomatal distribution as well as the degree and pattern of stomatal opening at low leaf water potential (Heckathorn and DeLucia 1991).

In Mediterranean ecosystems, the distribution of the dominant growth form and habitus is related to water availability. According to a gradient of increasing aridity, there is a decrease in the transpiring surfaces up to the complete lack of leaves in drought deciduous shrubs, associated with drought-evading annual species (De Micco and Aronne 2009). An intermediate form between evergreen and drought deciduous species is represented by seasonally dimorphic species. Unlike drought deciduous plants, in seasonally dimorphic species the decrease in transpiring surfaces during the drought period is not complete.

In particular, to cope with drought stress these species develop twigs with short internodes (brachyblasts) characterized by small xeromorphic leaves in summer, and twigs with longer internodes (dolichoblasts) with larger mesomorphic leaves in winter (De Micco and Aronne 2009). Seasonal leaf dimorphism has been reported to be an adaptive strategy to the seasonal climatic changes occurring in Mediterranean habitats (Aronne and De Micco, 2001; Christodoulakis et al. 1990; Kyparissis et al., 1997; Orshan 1964). Moreover, in seasonal dimorphic Mediterranean

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68   species leaf rolling has been decribed as a mechanism to reduce light interception (Aronne and De

69   Micco 2001; Gratani and Bombelli 1999).

70   Seasonal dimorphic *Cistus* sp. are known to avoid photochemistry drought induced impairment by

71   leaf movements such as variation in leaf angle (Flexas et al. 2014; Werner et al. 1999, 2001) and

72   leaf rolling. Among these species *Cistus incanus* L. is a typical Mediterranean shrub species

73   distributed along the coastal belt of the Central-Eastern Mediterranean, Northern Africa and

74   Western Asia, extending from sea level to 800 m a.s.l. (Pignatti 1982).

75   The aim of this research was to analyze the relationship between leaf rolling and physiological

76   variables in two populations of *Cistus incanus* growing at the altitudinal limits of its distribution

77   area and being subjected to different selective pressures. In particular, the population growing at the

78   highest altitude faces lower chilling temperatures during winter and a higher amount of

79   precipitation during the year associated to a reduced extent of summer drought. On the contrary, the

80   costal population faces a reduced amount of precipitation during the year associated to a prolonged

81   summer drought. The hypothesis that leaf rolling reflected physiological changes occurring during

82   water stress irrespective to the different acclimation to cope with water stress was tested.

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84   **Materials and methods**

85   **Study site and plant material**

86   The study was carried out in July 2014 at the experimental garden of Sapienza University of Rome

87   (41°54′N, 12°31′E; 41 m a.s.l.). Three-year old saplings of *C. incanus* grown from seeds collected

88   in June 2012 in the Mediterranean maquis developing along the *Latium* coast near Rome

89   (Castelporziano, 41°45′N, 12°26′E, 0 m a.s.l.) and at the Natural Park of Monti Lucretili (42°33′N,

90   12°54′E, 750 m a.s.l.) were considered. Saplings (twenty saplings per provenance) were cultivated

91   in plastic pots (32 cm diameter and 29 cm depth) containing silt (5-8 %), clay (16-39 %) and sand

92   (56-75%) (pH 7.2 – 7.5) and grown inside a growth chamber under constant photosynthetically

93   active radiation (PPFD) of 600 μmol m^{-2} s^{-1} (12 h), at 25/20 °C light/dark average temperature and

94   50/40% relative air humidity.

95   The provenance sites are characterized by a Mediterranean climate (Fig. 1). In particular, at

96   Castelporziano the mean minimum air temperature (T_{min}) of the coldest months (January and

97   February) is 4.8 ± 2.3°C, the mean maximum air temperature (T_{max}) of the hottest months (July and

98   August) is 30.5 ± 1.8°C, and the yearly mean air temperature (T_{mean}) is 16.4 ± 6.1°C. The dry period

99   is from mid-May to August (48.3 mm of total rainfall in this period). Total annual rainfall equals

100   824 mm with the greatest part occurring in autumn and in winter (data from Meteorological Station

101   of Roma Capocotta, SIARL, Arsial, for the period 2004–2013).

102   At the Natural Park of Monti Lucretili the mean minimum air temperature (T_{min}) of the coldest

103   months (January and February) is $0.5 \pm 1.6°C$, the mean maximum air temperature (T_{max}) of the

104   hottest months (July and August) is $32.7 \pm 1.6°C$, and the yearly mean air temperature (T_{mean}) is

105    $14.3 \pm 6.7°C$. The dry period is from mid-June to August (63.9 mm of total rainfall in this period).

106   Total annual rainfall equals 1077 mm with the greatest part occurring in autumn and in winter (data

107   from Meteorological Station of Palombara Sabina, SIARL, Arsial, for the period 2004–2013).

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Experimental procedure

110   Until the onset of the experiment (on July 5th), twenty saplings from Castelporziano and from Monti

111   Lucretili (CP and LC saplings, respectively) were watered regularly to field capacity. Gas exchange,

112   leaf water status, chlorophyll fluorescence and leaf rolling index measurements for the control

113   saplings were performed on the first day of the experiment when all the saplings were well watered.

114   Thereafter, the water stress was imposed by withholding water from ten CP and ten LC saplings,

115   randomly arranged (stressed saplings, CPs and LCs, for Castelporziano and Monti Lucretili,

116   respectively). In each sampling day the measurements were carried out on six randomly selected

117   saplings per provenance.

118   The remaining ten saplings per provenance were kept under daily irrigation and measured to verify

119   that the considered parameters maintained constant values through the experiment. The water stress

120   experiment was stopped when stomatal conductance in CPs and LCs was below 0.05 mol m^{-2} s^{-1}

121   indicative of a severe water stress condition (Medrano et al. 2002). On the whole the experiment

122   lasted four days. Thereafter, the experimental days are indicated as D1 (first experimental day), D2

123   (two days after the beginning of the experiment) and D3 (four days after the beginning of the

124   experiment).

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Gas exchange

127   During the experiment, maximum net CO_2 assimilation rate (A_{max}, μmol CO_2 m^{-2} s^{-1}), stomatal

128   conductance (g_s, mol H_2O m^{-2} s^{-1}), leaf transpiration (E, mmol H_2O m^{-2} s^{-1}) and substomatal CO_2

129   concentration (C_i, ppm) were measured with an open infrared gas analyser system (LCpro+, ADC,

130   UK), equipped with a leaf chamber (PLC, ADC, UK).

131   Measurements were carried out while the natural inclination of the leaves was maintained. Between

132   each measurement the IRGA was calibrated for CO_2 and water vapor following the instructions of

133   the manufacturers.

134   Six measurements on young fully expanded sun leaves per each selected control and stressed

135   sapling were carried out every two days in the morning (11.00–12.30 h) at saturating PPFD (1500

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136 μmol photon m^{-2} s^{-1}) provided by the light source (LCpro+ Lamp unit). Before each measurement,

137 the leaves were acclimated to saturated light conditions (*c.* 15-20 min). CO_2 concentration in the

138 leaf chamber (C_a) was set at 400 μmol CO_2 mol^{-1}air, and relative air humidity of the incoming air

139 ranged between 40% and 60%. Leaf temperature (T_l, °C) was set at 25°C and varied by 1% during

140 measurements. Apparent carboxylation efficiency (C_e) was also determined by the ratio between

141 A_{max} and C_i (Flexas et al. 2001).

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143 **Chlorophyll fluorescence**

144 Measurements of chlorophyll fluorescence were carried out on the same leaves of gas exchange

145 measurements, using a portable modulated fluorometer (OS5p, Opti-Sciences, USA).

146 Chlorophyll fluorescence measurements were carried out at saturating PPFD (i.e. 1500 μmol photon

147 m^{-2} s^{-1}) ensuring a uniform light distribution on leaf surface while maintaining an inclination of the

148 fluorometer pulse source at 45°.

149 The actual quantum efficiency of the photosystem II (Φ_{PSII}) was calculated according to Genty et al.

150 (1989) as:

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152 $$\Phi_{PSII} = (F_m' - F_s) / F_m',$$

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154 where F_m' was the maximum fluorescence obtained with a saturating pulse (*c.* 8,000 μmol m^{-2} s^{-1}

155 PPFD) and F_s was the steady-state fluorescence of illuminated leaves (1,500 μmol m^{-2} s^{-1} PPFD).

156 The rate of electron transport rate (ETR) was calculated, according to Krall and Edwards (1992) as:

157

158 $$ETR = (\Phi_{PSII}) \times PPFD \times 0.5 \times 0.84.$$

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161 **Leaf water status**

162 Leaf water potential (Ψ_{leaf}, MPa) was measured in control and stressed plants by a pressure bomb

163 (SKPM 1400, Sky Instruments, Powys, UK).

164 The samples were enclosed in a bag previously saturated with CO_2 and water vapor in order to

165 avoid water losses from stomata.

166 Measurements were carried out in each sampling occasion on four leaves per each of the considered

167 sapling after gas exchange measurements. In addition, relative water content (RWC, %) was

168 measured as:

169

170 $$RWC = [(FW - DW) / (TW - DW)] \times 100$$

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172 where FW was the leaf fresh weight, DW was the leaf dry weight after drying at 80 °C until

173 constant weight was reached, and TW was the leaf weight after re-hydration until saturation for 48h

174 at 5 °C in the darkness.

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176 **Leaf rolling index**

177 Leaf rolling index (LRI, %) was calculated on the same leaves used for gas exchange measurements

178 according to Li et al. (2010) as:

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180 $$LRI = [(L_w - L_n) / L_w] \times 100$$

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182 where L_w was the maximum leaf blade width and L_n the natural distance of the leaf blade margins.

183 For LRI measurements L_w was measured only at D1 in order to avoid any confounding effect of leaf

184 manipulation on gas exchange and chlorophyll fluorescence measurements.

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186 **Statistical analysis**

187 One-way ANOVA was performed to evaluate the differences between CPs and LCs and between

188 stressed and control saplings at $p \leq 0.05$. Multiple comparisons were analyzed by a Tukey test.

189 Regression analysis was used to explore the relationships among the considered variables.

190 Relationships were considered significant at $p \leq 0.01$.

191 Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Levene tests were used to verify the assumptions of normality and

192 homogeneity of variances, respectively. All data are shown as mean ± standard deviation (s.d.).

193 All the statistic tests were performed by a statistical software package (Statistica.8, Stasoft, USA).

194

195 **Results**

196 **Gas exchange**

197 The daily gas exchange measurements are shown in and Figure 2.

198 During the experiment the highest A_{max} values were measured at D1 for both CPs (18.6±2.6 µmol

199 CO_2 m^{-2} s^{-1}) and LCs (10.5±2.6 µmol CO_2 m^{-2} s^{-1}). A_{max} decreased by 32% and 83%, at D2 and D3,

200 respectively in CPs, and by 23% and 88%, respectively, in LCs (Fig. 2A). g_s showed the same A_{max}

201 trend dropping below 0.05 mol H_2O m^{-2} s^{-1} at D3 for both CPs and LCs (Fig. 2B).

202 In CPs saplings C_i was 260±9.8 ppm at D1 decreasing by 6% at D2 and increasing by 9% at D3

203 compared to D1. C_i increased during the experiment by 11% and 41% at D2 and D3, respectively,

204 compared to D1 (224±22 ppm). C_e did not vary between D1 and D2 in CPs (0.04±0.01) while it

205 decreased by 75% at D3. In LCs, C_e decreased by 50% and 92%, at D2 and D3, respectively,

206 compared to D1 (0.04±0.01) (Fig. 2D).

207 The control plants did not show any significant variation in gas exchange parameters during the

208 experiment both in CPc and LCc.

209

Chlorophyll fluorescence

211 The ETR and Φ_{PSII} values measured during the experiment are shown in Fig. 3.

212 In particular, in CPs ETR decreased by 14% and 30% at D2 and D3, respectively, compared to D1

213 (221.9±20.2 µmol e$^-$ m^{-2} s^{-1}) (Fig. 3A). Φ_{PSII} showed the same ETR trend with the highest value at

214 D1 (0.38±0.05) decreasing by 8% and 37% at D2 and D3, respectively (Fig. 3B).

215 In LCs saplings ETR and Φ_{PSII} through the experiment did not vary significantly between the

216 experimental days (Fig. 3A, B).

217

Leaf water status

219 The measured values of RWC and Ψ_{leaf} are shown in Table 1.

220 CPs and LCs showed a significant decrease (by 113% and 133%) in Ψ_{leaf} compared to D1 (-

221 1.50±0.2 and -1.50±0.02 MPa for CPc and LCc, respectively). RWC was 100% at D1 in both

222 control and stressed saplings decreasing by 75% in both CPs and LCs at D3. Control plants did not

223 show any significant variation of RWC and Ψ_{leaf} during the experiment.

224

Leaf rolling index

226 At D1 both CPs and LCs did not show any symptom of rolling. At D2, LRI did not increase in CPs

227 while it slightly and significantly increased by 2% in LCs. LRI increased by 7% and 28% in CPs

228 and LCs, respectively, at D3.

229 Control saplings did not show any symptom of rolling during the experiment (Table 2).

230 LRI showed a linear relationship (p < 0.01) with C_i (R^2=0.62 and R^2=0.73, for CPs and LCs,

231 respectively) and g_s (R^2= −0.62 and R^2= −0.73, for CPs and LCs, respectively). LRI was also

232 significantly related with C_e in both CPs and LCs (R^2= −0.76 and R^2= −0.81, respectively) while it

233 is significantly correlated with ETR only in CPs (R^2= −0.41).

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Discussion

The results highlight a different response of CPs and LCs to water stress, which reflects their different provenances. In fact, LCs saplings, which experience a shorter period of drought in their natural environment in respect to CP saplings, are characterized by a higher sensitivity to water stress highlighted by a faster metabolic impairment.

In particular, both CPs and LCs showed the lowest values of Ψ_{leaf} (-3.2±0.03 and -3.5±0.05 MPa, respectively) at D3 reaching a RWC value of 75.5±0.7%. When expressed as percentage of the control, A_{max}, g_s and E trends were similar in CPs and LCs. Nevertheless, ETR and C_e were the parameters that showed the greatest differences between CPs and LCs.

According to Lawlor and Cornic (2002), the decrease in RWC increases C_i. However, in CPs, C_i decreases at D2 (6%) and increased by 9% at D3, compared to D1. In LCs C_i increases through the experiment. In response to stomatal closure, CO_2 inside the leaf initially declines then it increases as drought become more severe (Lawlor 1995). The decrease in C_i at D2 for CPs plants suggest that stomatal limitations dominate under moderate water stress, irrespective of any metabolic impairment (Flexas and Medrano 2002). However, at a certain stage of water stress C_i frequently increases highlighting the predominance of non-stomatal limitations of photosynthesis. Usually, the point at which C_i starts to increase occurs around g_s values of 0.05 mol H_2O m^{-2} s^{-1} (Flexas and Medrano 2002). Accordingly, CPs show the highest value of C_i at D3 when g_s was 0.03 mol H_2O m^{-2} s^{-1}. On the contrary, LCs show the occurrence of non-stomatal limitations in D2 when g_s was 0.07 mol H_2O m^{-2} s^{-1}. The results are confirmed by the different C_e trend in CPs and LCs. In fact, CPs show C_e values equal to 100% of the control until D2, decreasing by 25% of the control at D3, while in LCs C_e decreases by 50% and 7.5% of the control at D2 and D3, respectively.

A RWC higher than 75% has not effect on photosynthetic metabolism (Lawlor and Cornic 2002). Nevertheless, the results of the experiment highlight a faster progressive inhibition of metabolism in LCs, associated to a higher RWC (i.e. 80%), than in CPs.

Water stress exposes plants to photo-inhibition by reducing PSII efficiency and ETR (Cabrera 2002). During the experiment both ETR and Φ_{PSII} decrease in CPs showing the lowest values at D3, while in LCs they do not vary significantly compared to the control. In particular, the ETR and Φ_{PSII} decrease in CPs at D2 may be interpreted as a down-regulation mechanism at lower A_{max} (Biehler and Fock 1996; Cornic and Massacci 1996; Haupt-Herting and Fock, 2000, 2002). Since the rate of electron transport at saturating photon flux is determined by sink capacity for electrons (such as photosynthesis at high RWC), a decreased sink capacity for electrons results in an increased non-photochemical energy dissipation (Lawlor and Cornic 2002). This may be justified by Φ_{PSII} reduction observed in CPs while the ETR decrease at D3 may be the result of non-stomatal

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268   limitations. On the contrary, the lack of variation in ETR and Φ_{PSII} in LCs suggests that the redox

269   system under water stress is in a reduced state due to continued electron transport and absence of

270   sinks (Lawlor and Cornic 2002), as confirmed by the significant decrease in C_e through the

271   experiment. Moreover, the constant ETR and the C_i increase in LCs during the experiment could be

272   also due to an increased photorespiration rate. In fact, decreasing RWC has long been known to

273   increase the ratio of photorespiration to photosynthesis (Lawlor 1976; Lawlor and Fock 1975).

274   Nevertheless, fluorescence and O_2 isotope analysis showed that despite in stressed leaves the

275   photorespiration to photosynthesis ratio increases, the absolute photorespiration rate was not so

276   large like in unstressed leaves, so fewer electrons may be used (Biehler and Fock 1996).

277   During the experiment LCs show leaf rolling (i.e. LRI = 2±1%) at D2 increasing to 28±14% at D3,

278   while in CPs leaf rolling (LRI = 7±3%) appears at D3. Since leaf rolling is a hydronastic

279   mechanism the delayed leaf rolling in CPs indicates the ability to better sustain turgor, despite water

280   stress, compared to LCs according to Kadioglu et al. (2012).

281   Moreover, LRI shows a significant (p < 0.01) linear relationship with C_i (R^2=0.62 and R^2=0.73, for

282   CPs and LCs, respectively) and g_s (R^2= −0.62 and R^2= −0.73, for CPs and LCs, respectively),

283   suggesting that LRI reflects the leaf physiological changing which occur during water stress. LRI is

284   also significantly related with C_e in both CPs and LCs (R^2= −0.76 and R^2= −0.81, respectively)

285   while it is significantly correlated with ETR only in CPs (R^2= −0.41). The lack or the weakness of

286   the relationship between LRI and ETR, associated to a strong negative relationships between LRI

287   and C_e in both CPs and LCs, suggests that LRI is involved in protecting PSII under drought

288   condition (Nar et al. 2009) during the progressive inhibition of photosynthetic metabolism.

289   In conclusion, the results highlighted that leaf rolling is related to the physiological variables in both

290   CPs and LCs despite their different response to water stress. Thus, leaf rolling in seasonal

291   dimorphic Medieterranean species may be used as morphological index not only to monitor the

292   water status in the field but also to evaluate the progressive inhibition of photosynthetic metabolism

293   irrespective to the different acclimation to cope with water stress.

294

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Ψ_{leaf} (Mpa)			
CPs	**CPc**	**LCs**	**LCc**
D1 -1.50±0.2 a,A	- 1.54±0.03 a,A	- 1.50±0.02 a,A	- 1.48±0.01 a,A
D2 - 1.90±0.1 b,A	- 1.53±0.03 a,B	- 2.10±0.01 b,A	- 1.52±0.01 a,B
D3 - 3.20±0.03 c,A	- 1.52±0.02 a,B	- 3.50±0.07 c,A	- 1.54±0.02 a,B

RWC (%)			
CPs	**CPc**	**LCs**	**LCc**
D1 98±0.02 a,A	100±0.01 a,A	99±0.02 a,A	99±0.008 a,A
D2 84±0.01 b,A	98±0.02 a,B	82±0.03 b,A	99±0.002 a,B
D3 75±0.07 c,A	98±0.02 a,B	76±0.06 c,A	98±0.009 a,B

Table 1. Leaf water potential (Ψ_{leaf}) and relative water content (RWC) measured during the first experimental day (D1), two days after the beginning of the experiment (D2) and four days after the beginning of the experiment (D3). CPs = stressed saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Castelporziano, CPc = control saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Castelporziano, LCs = stressed saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Natural Park of Monti Lucretili LCc = control saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Natural Park of Monti Lucretili. Mean values (± SE) are shown (n = 24). Lowercase letters show significant differences between experimental days, capital letters show significant differences between control and stressed saplings at p = 0.05.

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	LRI (%)			
	CPs	**CPc**	**LCs**	**LCc**
D1	0	0	0	0
D2	0	0	2±1	0
D3	7±3a	0	28±14b	0

Table 2. Leaf rolling index (LRI) measured during the first experimental day (D1), two days after the beginning of the experiment (D2) and four days after the beginning of the experiment (D3). CPs = stressed saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Castelporziano, CPc = control saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Castelporziano, LCs = stressed saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Natural Park of Monti Lucretili, LCc = control saplings of *Cistus incanus* from Natural Park of Monti Lucretili. Mean values (± SE) are shown (n = 24). Lowercase letters show significant differences between CPs and LCs saplings at p = 0.05.

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Figure legends

Fig. 1. Bagnouls-Gaussen's diagram (Time series 2004-2013) for A: Castelporziano 41°45′N, 12°26′E, 0 m a.s.l., and for B: the Natural Park of Monti Lucretili (42°33′N, 12°54′E, 750 m a.s.l.).

Fig. 2. Trends of A: maximum net CO_2 assimilation rate (A_{max}), B: stomatal conductance (g_s), C: leaf transpiration (E), and D: carboxylation efficiency (C_e) measured during the first experimental day (D1), two days after the beginning of the experiment (D2) and four days after the beginning of the experiment (D3) of stressed *Cistus incanus* saplings from Castelporziano (CPs, black line) and from the Natural Park of Monti Lucretili (LCs, gray line). Mean values (± SE) are shown (n =36). Lowercase letters show significant differences between experimental days, capital letters show significant differences between CPs and LCs saplings at p = 0.05.

Fig. 3. Trends of: A: rate of electron transport (ETR), and B: the actual quantum efficiency of the photosystem II (Φ_{PSII}) measured during the first experimental day (D1), two days after the beginning of the experiment (D2) and four days after the beginning of the experiment (D3) of stressed *Cistus incanus* saplings from Castelporziano (CPs, black line) and from the Natural Park of Monti Lucretili (LCs, gray line). Mean values (± SE) are shown (n =36). Lowercase letters show significant differences between experimental days, capital letters show significant differences between CPs and LCs saplings at p = 0.05.

Fig. 4. Relationships between leaf rolling index (LRI) and substomatal CO_2 concentration (C_i), stomatal conductance (g_s), carboxylation efficiency (C_e) and rate of electron transport (ETR) of stressed *Cistus incanus* saplings from Castelporziano (CPs, black dots, left column) and from the Natural Park of Monti Lucretili (LCs, gray dots, right column). Daily mean values per sapling were used as experimental units ($n = 18$, $p \leq 0.01$).

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461   **Fig. 1**

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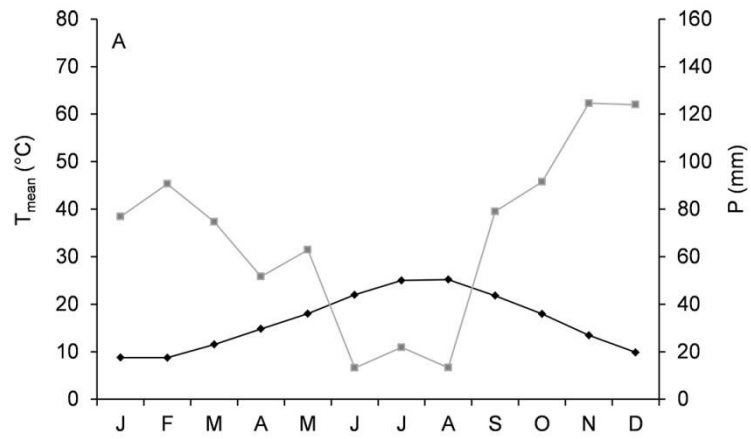467

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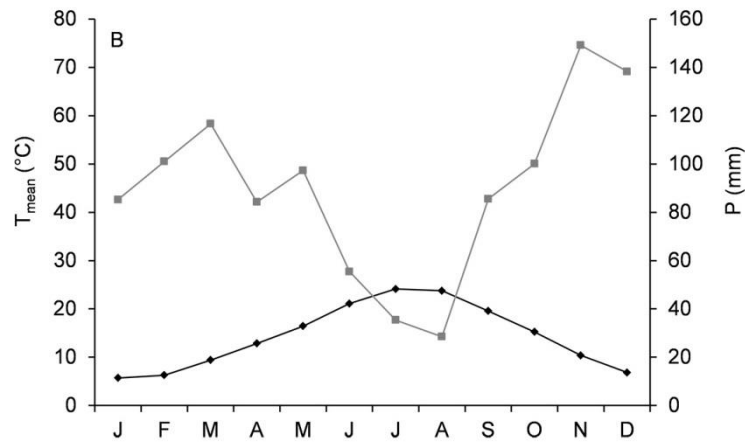473

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485   **Fig. 2.**

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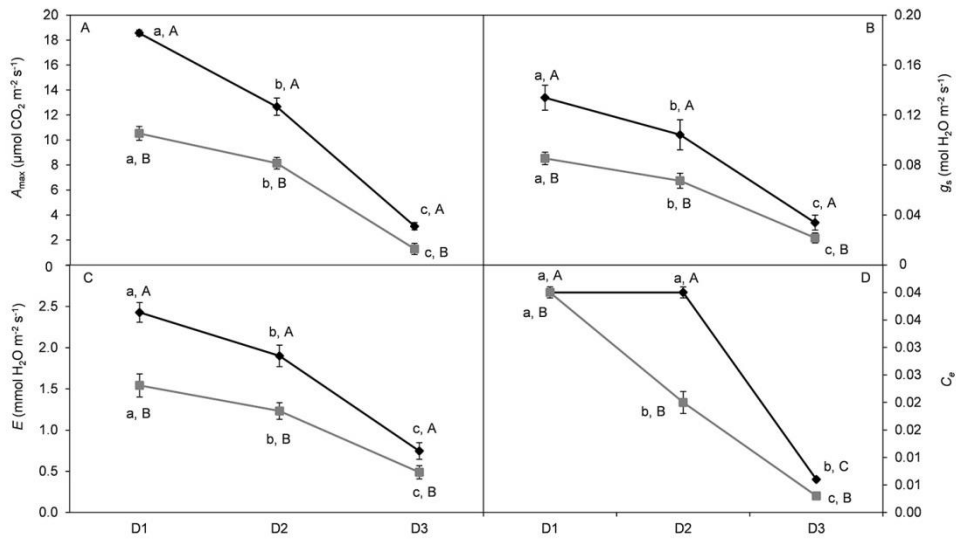
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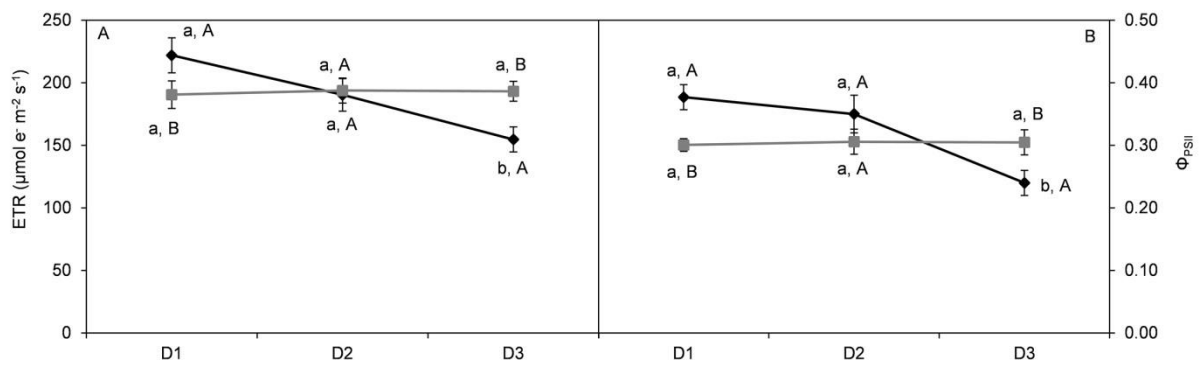
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509   **Fig. 3.**

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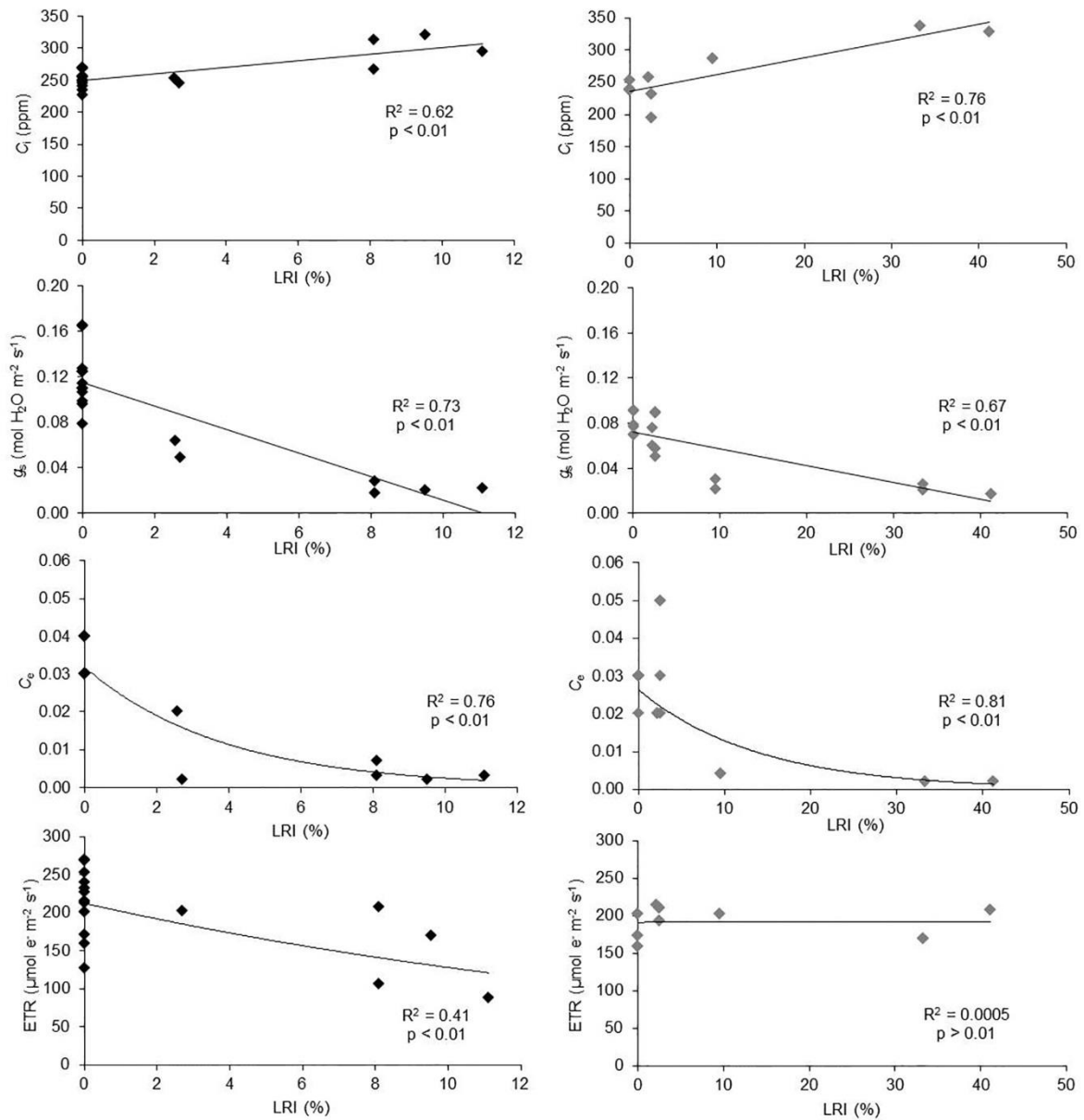

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530 **Fig. 4.**

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