**Gracilaria parva: A Novel Species**

Based on morpho-anatomical characters of vegetative and reproductive anatomy, it has been difficult to distinguish species of the red algal genus Gracilaria in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans of Central and tropical South America. DNA sequencing of the plastid encoded rbcL gene revealed a widely distributed (about 1,150 km) novel species of Gracilaria in both Ecuador and Pacific Panama which we have tentatively named Gracilaria parva. Additionally, DNA sequencing suggests that this novel species is most closely related to an Atlantic Panamanian species Gracilaria galetensis with 99% support from both Bayesian and maximum likelihood analysis. As such, these results suggest a novel Pacific Gracilaria species.