

European Marine Biology Symposium, Scotland 23-27 August 2010
Hazel Needham (University of Waikato)

Many thanks to the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society for contributing towards my travel expenses to the European Marine Biology symposium (EMBS) held in Edinburgh Scotland in August 2010. This conference was held in partnership with the Estuarine and Coastal Sciences Association (ECSA) which is an organisation dedicated to the study of all aspects of estuarine and coastal marine science and the application of science for conservation and environmental management,. Although the focus has been on European systems in the past, this now has many members globally. I used this opportunity to join ECSA as their quarterly bulletin and e-mails provide articles of interest, workshops and conferences, job opportunities and funding, providing information on potential post-doctorate opportunities and collaborations.

The EMBS conference comprised several broad themes: Impacts of disease on marine ecology, general marine biology and diversity, marine biotechnology, marine renewables, ocean acidification and climate change, invasive species, seamount and general conservation (which included several presentations on shellfish aquaculture management). Due to the broad nature of the conference, I gained great insight in to many of the key research areas and focuses being undertaken by the European science community. Several presentations were also given by members of local regional councils (Countryside Council for Wales, English Nature and Scottish Natural Heritage) and other end users, highlighting the good communication between academics, researchers and managers. Many subjects were highly relevant to New Zealand research and development. So much so, Dr Malcom Clark from NIWA Wellington chaired one Seamount session, with three presentations on this subject matter being given by southern hemisphere scientists.

My presentation was entitled 'The functional role of *Austrohelice crassa* in the regulation of nutrient cycling, which was well received and created general discussions on bioturbating fauna between me and several other delegates. A good cross section of people attended the conference ranging from masters students to professors and senior researchers. Everyone was very friendly and approachable making networking very easy. Several social events were included in the proceedings to encourage discussion, including the 'Yellow Submarine' contest, an annual event which included whisky tasting, haggis throwing and Scottish country dancing! I would recommend this conference to students and young researchers who have little experience in presenting their research particularly those who may be interested in moving or returning to Europe in the future. Several young researchers approached me to ask about potential opportunities in New Zealand acknowledging of the calibre of our marine science community.