

Overview of the 7th World Fisheries Congress in Busan, South Korea

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Thanks to the generous support of the New Zealand Marine Science Society I was able to attend my first overseas conference, the 7th World Fisheries Congress which was held in Busan, South Korea. At this conference I presented the results of the first two years of my PhD research which has focused on investigating the chemosensory behaviour of New Zealand scampi (*Metanephrops challenger*), in order to find effective baits to use in a potting fishery targeting scampi. The conference hosted 36 total sessions, including “Advances in fishing technology in support of sustainable fisheries” in which I presented. During this session there were 26 presentations over two days, and speakers were present from Universities and Research Institutes from all over the globe. Highlights of the conference which were of particular interest to me and relevance to NZ included:

- Attending the ‘Advances in Fisheries Technology in Support of Sustainable Fisheries’ and “Advances in estimating global fisheries bycatch” sessions where there were talks which discussed new global approaches to improving fisheries technologies and approaches to reduce the impact of fishing on the environment. There was an emphasis on quantifying what was in the fishing gear before it was hauled and improving the efficiency and selectivity of current fishing methods. Electronic monitoring was also highlighted as a step forward in improving fisheries compliance and real time monitoring.
- Meeting the members of the members of the ICES/FAO Fishing Technology and Behaviour working group including Drs Pingguo He and Petri Suuronen who co-chaired the session that I was attended.
- The range of keynote speakers which presented every morning and included Professors Ray Hillbron and Felicity Huntingford. Dr Huntingford presented on ‘How Smart are Fish?’, which discussed how fish learn to adapt and change their behaviour in response to fishing gear.
- Discussions centring on the establishment of FAO Fisheries University in Korea. Which the Korean government has pledged US\$ 100 million for the first 10 years of operation. The aim of the university would be to increase global capacity and knowledge at post-graduate levels in fisheries and aquaculture with a special focus on students from developing countries. This is a project in which New Zealand could contribute its fisheries expertise and help to develop a new generation of fisheries scientists.
- Visiting the Jagalchi fish market, and witnessing the vast array of seafood from all over the region.
- Experiencing the Korean culture and enjoying the range of local food.