First Overseas Conference Travel Fund Report

4th World Conference on Marine Biodiversity; *Connecting with the living ocean*

Montreal, Canada, May 13th – 16th 2018

*Tarn Drylie, PhD candidate, University of Waikato*

I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society for enabling me to attend my first overseas conference, an experience that was hugely valuable and would not have been possible without the Society’s support. I attended the 4th meeting of the World Conference on Marine Biodiversity which occurs every 4 years, and given I am in the final year of my PhD study, it was now or never! After the conference I extended my time in Canada to include a research visit to Université Laval in Québec, hosted by Professor Philippe Archamboult, who was the chair of the conference organising committee.

I thoroughly enjoyed the various presentations I attended, and often found myself torn between which sessions to attend. Session topics ranged from biodiversity in the Arctic to the deep-sea to the tropics, as well as covering climate change impacts on biodiversity, novel marine technologies, marine policy and stewardship, cumulative impacts of human activities, ecological traits and ecosystem function, and my session: “biodiversity and ecosystem function in the real world”. I particularly enjoyed the morning plenaries, as 2 out of 3 were given by women in science, and the third was by a social scientist who really opened my eyes to the different ways in which we can communicate our science to broad audiences (such as poetry and contemporary dance!). I felt extremely motivated and optimistic about my own work after seeing such interesting presentations over the week.

The conference was attended by 600 delegates from 54 different countries, and gave me a great insight into the vast array of marine research that is taking place around the world. I was fortunate enough to present my research as an oral presentation, and doing so at such a meeting allowed me to realise that my work in New Zealand is important, relevant and of a high enough quality to be considered globally. I presented initial results from my recent work on the role calcium carbonate plays in buffering against fluctuations in pH intertidal sediments; I am currently analysing the data from this study and it was incredibly helpful to discuss possible approaches with fellow researchers at the conference, and gave me some new ideas that I will take forward in my study.

My visit to Université Laval was fantastic, and only made possible due to my attending the conference. I spent two days there first presenting my thesis research, and then hearing from Philippe’s research group about their current studies. There were some strong parallels between our work, and I have no doubt that the visit opened up the possibility for scientific collaboration in the future.

Huge thanks again,

Tarn

**Tarn Drylie**

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