

NZMSS First Overseas Conference Travel Fund Report

**European Marine Biology Symposium (EMBS 54)**

Dublin, Ireland, August 25-29, 2019

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I would like to express my gratitude to the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society for the support to travel to Dublin, Ireland to present at my first international conference. I attended the 54th European Marine Biology Symposium, whose ideas and values align closely with my thesis. This conference hosted delegates from across the world, working in a multitude of sectors including estuarine research and ecosystem services. This was extended to the plenary talks, whereby prominent scientists provided interesting perspectives on the challenges facing our estuarine and coastal systems.

I was fortunate to be able to give an oral presentation on part of my PhD research entitled “Shining light on the importance of intertidal benthic primary productivity to estuarine ecosystem function”. This talk was part of the “rapid change” session encompassing many of the global problems facing our marine ecosystems. As this conference had one session, it meant I was able to communicate my work with over 150 people, which enabled me the opportunity to discuss my work further with delegates from a broad spectrum of backgrounds and perspectives. My presentation was well received with relevant and interesting questions from the audience. I thoroughly enjoyed being involved in this session and the discussions which followed.

Aside from the value of presenting my research to a wide audience at an international conference, I was able to learn a lot from seeing such a broad spectrum of talks whereby ideas and methods can often be adapted to give a new perspective on the area I am working in. In addition, by attending the functions, I was able to network with other early career researchers and make valuable contacts from across the world.

In addition to attending EMBS, I also had the opportunity to visit the Tvärminne Zoological Station field station, University of Helsinki, Finland, which was only possible through my attendance at the conference. I spent a week at the field station where I gave a short seminar on my PhD project entitled “Multi-stressor impacts on ecosystem function within soft sediments”. Meeting and discussing both my research and that of the academics and students at this marine station was invaluable in both gaining an insight to other research and techniques as well as building contacts from across the globe. There were some strong parallels between our work and therefore I have no doubt this trip will have opened up the possibility for scientific collaboration in the future.

I would again like to thank the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society for their generous contribution towards funding my first overseas conference. It is through these meetings that ideas and perspectives can be shared in order to enhance the research and success of researchers and for enabling international collaborations.

Thank you,

Steph Mangan

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