



4th International Marine Conservation Congress

Making Marine Science Matter

30 July – 3 August 2016

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada (YYT)

Note to International Marine Conservation Congress proposal and abstract reviewers:

The main goal of the IMCC meetings is to discuss and promote marine conservation studies (natural or social science) and issues that matter. One of the most important criteria is the potential conservation impact that the study could be—either at a global or regional/local level. Proposals that are simply ecological studies of species that are threatened—where the status of the species is largely incidental to conclusions of the study—are not the sort of studies we are generally looking for. We want presenters to take the extra step of translating the conservation implications of their study or making tangible recommendations for conservation in practice.

IMCC submissions are frequently from diverse disciplines and can range from discussions on legislation and regulatory regimes, to experiments on the potential effects of ocean acidification, to surveys on public awareness and attitudes to fisheries management, to suggestions of maximizing social media for publicizing marine conservation science. There is no hierarchy of fields as far as IMCCs are concerned—all fields can provide valuable contributions to marine conservation. Conservation is inherently interdisciplinary.

That said, many influential marine conservation projects do not fit into the scientific presentation model, whether they be workshops, symposia or presentations/posters. (i.e. Some of the most innovative presentations do not follow the introduction-method-results-discussion format.) Submissions should not be marked down for having an innovative or non-traditional structure. However, it is important that statements and conservation advice in presentations be based on evidence.

Many presenters at IMCCs do not have English as their first language, and many are from developing nations that lack institutional support or resources for translation. Therefore, reviewers should not mark down presenters from outside of English-speaking countries for grammatical, spelling and other mistakes that may be consistent with not being a native English speaker. Reviewers should instead highlight the proposed presentation so that organizers can connect presenters with translation and proofreading support. If a submission is completed in a language other than English, please email the name of the submitter and submission ID to samantha.oester@gmail.com for reviews to be arranged in the submission language.

Furthermore, although we want content that has a broad geographical focus, we do not want to discount submissions because the abstract/description concerns data from a small geographical area. By disregarding submissions that seem to describe studies which occurred in a limited region, conferences implicitly discount research from many developing nations and other under-served areas. Researchers in under-represented regions may not have the resources to conduct large-scale studies, and thus their science and regions go unrepresented. Additionally, studies conducted in a small area may have lessons



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learned that are applicable to similar regions elsewhere in the world and may have broad use in applied conservation. IMCCs are global and strive to be inclusive.

If a proposal or abstract is submitted and has merit, but not for the submitted category, reviewers should recommend an alternative format in the comments (for example, if a submitted symposium would be better as a focus group, or a submitted oral presentation would be better as a poster). If a submission has merit, we do not want to disregard it because the author/organizer chose the wrong category.

The SCB Marine Section highlighted 71 research questions of particular importance to marine conservation. We are very keen to monitor which presentations address one or more of these questions, so please note this on your reviews. Work that addresses these questions is considered to be "relevant to the conference theme." We have also highlighted particular themes we'd like to see presented at IMCC4: <http://conbio.org/mini-sites/imcc-2016/about/congress-theme/>.

While we are particularly interested in attracting presentations related to the meeting themes, we encourage and will endeavor to present work of conservation importance that is outside of those themes.

If you have any questions, please refer to the guidelines in the Call for Proposals: <http://conbio.org/mini-sites/imcc-2016/registration-participation/call-for-proposals-1/>. If you still have questions, email Scientific Program Chair Leslie Cornick (lcornick@alaskapacific.edu).

Thank you for reviewing IMCC4 submissions and helping to Make Marine Science Matter!