

First Blue Think Conference – Share Science, Spread Knowledge

September 17th, 2020

Meeting Report – ISME Ambassadors Program

Useful Webpages:

Blue Think Conference (BTC): <https://phdcommittee.wixsite.com/bluethinkconference>
Interdisciplinary Centre of Marine and Environmental Research (CIIMAR):
<https://www2.ciimar.up.pt/>

Report:

The 1st Blue Think Conference (BTC) was organized by early-stage researchers (ESR) at the Interdisciplinary Centre of Marine and Environmental Research (CIIMAR), a leading, "excellence" research and advanced training institution of University of Porto, which coordinates a wide range scientific programmes at the frontier of ocean knowledge and innovation.

BTC was held via on-line streaming on Slack, on the 17th of September 2020, from 10:00 am to 06:00pm. The Conference was attended by over 140 participants. About 80% of the participants were Master or PhD students.

BTC was structured into **three main sessions**, each of which counting on one invite keynote speaker: **1) Aquaculture and seafood quality** (Keynote, Prof. Alicia Toranzo, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain), **2) Marine Biotechnology** (Keynote: Prof. Rodrigo Costa, University of Lisbon, Portugal), **3) Global Changes** (Keynote: Dr. Nuno Queiroz, Research Center in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources, Portugal). After the keynote lectures, 10 min. presentations followed in each session, totalling 20 such oral presentations held throughout the Conference. All these presentations were held by early-stage researchers, mostly PhD students. More than 100 poster presentations across the three sessions complemented the programme. While all oral presentations were followed by live streaming using the Zoom application on Slack, all posters could be seen and commented on via Slack during the Poster sessions, which took place between the oral presentations. Altogether, the Conference was considered to be a great success by organizers, moderators, evaluators and participants regarding both the quality of the science presented and the "smoothness" with which the whole programme was carried out without a minimum of technical hurdles or delays in schedule, which was quite impressive in my opinion.

The ISME Ambassadors program was an official sponsor of BTC by conceding prizes for the best oral presentation in each of the abovementioned sessions. Oral presentations in each session were evaluated by me and the respective session moderators, experienced researchers in each area. After brief exchange of our impressions on each presentation, we the evaluators decided for the following winners in each session:

1) Aquaculture and seafood quality

Sofia Graça Aranha

"Diet and ecophysiological condition of deep-water sharks using non-lethal approaches"

2) Marine Biotechnology

Mariana Girão

“Algae-associated *Actinobacteria*: unveiling their diversity and potential to produce novel bioactive compounds”

3) Global Changes and Ecosystem Services

Sabrina Rodrigues

“Occurrence, abundance and characteristics of microplastics along the northern coastal waters of Portugal”

According to the application I submitted earlier this year to support the Blue Think Conference, each winner is now eligible to receive a 200 € prize from the ISME Ambassadors Program. Each winner received a certificate as well with my signature and the ISME logo on it.

Along with this report, I am submitting, **via WeTransfer**, the folder named “Prints BTC”, which contains screenshots of the keynote lectures, of the winning oral presentations, and of a 5 min speech I could give to disseminate ISME among the participants. They were presented to the Society, the Journal, to the ISME Symposium and learned more about the Ambassadors program. Enclosed to my message you also find the ISME reimbursement form containing bank transfer details.

Altogether, ISME sponsorship and the Ambassadors Program were highlighted on the Conference website before and after the event, in the Program Booklet, and in several interventions throughout the event, made by me and the organizers, calling attention to ISME’s sponsorship.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further details about the Conference.

Yours faithfully,



Rodrigo Costa

Conference Chair