

Report on Canadian Conference for Fisheries Research (CCFFR)

As part of the CCFFR-FSBI student exchange program, I attended the Canadian Conference for Fisheries Research (CCFFR), in Ottawa, Canada, from 8th to 11th January, 2015. The conference presented the latest fisheries research, covering a broad range of themes from the impacts of climate change on aquatic ecosystems, to multiple stressors and managing non-native species, to advances in the 'omics technologies and their applications in aquatic monitoring.

I delivered an oral presentation of the work which will form the first chapter of my PhD thesis, giving me the opportunity to discuss my research with experts and to receive constructive feedback on my work to date. My oral presentation, "Mechanisms of Reproductive Toxicity Following Exposure to Bisphenol A in Zebrafish (*Danio rerio*)", explored some of the reproductive effects I had observed during the study, and proposed some of the potential genetic and epigenetic mechanisms of toxicity.

I am extremely grateful to the CCFFR-FSBI student exchange program, as this made it possible for me to attend this conference and the CCFFR committee for making me feel extremely welcome. I was introduced to many new friends, and had an excellent experience exploring both the conference itself, and Ottawa. Ottawa is a beautiful city, which at the time was experiencing temperatures as low as -25 °C and was covered in snow, an exciting spectacle for someone from the South West of England. This is an excellent link between the two societies, which enabled me to network with other PhD students and academics from across North America.

A highlight of the conference was the final day, when the CCFFR committee organised a Student Success Workshop, covering topics such as 'getting published', 'science communication and outreach', 'scoring a job', and 'the science-policy interface'. The panel included a diverse array of experts, including academics at different career stages, journal editors, professionals working in the area of policy and government scientists. For me, this session was particularly engaging; after 3 days of inspirational science and many excellent oral and poster presentations I was left feeling extremely motivated. This workshop was an excellent tool to send all the students away feeling inspired and equipped to tackle the next manuscript, or prepared to find the right Post-doc. It was really useful to gain a perspective of how the academic system works in Canada, and to gain feedback on what is expected when applying for positions in North America after completing a PhD in the UK.

The CCFFR-FSBI exchange scheme was invaluable; this conference gave me some great opportunities to gain scientific knowledge and to network with other scientists from around the world working in the area of fisheries research. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and strongly recommend other FSBI funded students should apply for the student exchange scheme.

