

# FISH BYTES

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## Spaceship Earth – Meeting challenges for living on the blue planet under siege

By Dana Miller, Cornelia E. Nauen, and Ngaio Hotte



*The participants remaining to the very end (a few are not pictured because they had to catch planes; courtesy: Cornelia E. Nauen)*

In early May, UBC's Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies hosted a week-long international roundtable meeting entitled 'Spaceship Earth — Meeting challenges for living on the blue planet under siege'. The organization of this unique interdisciplinary gathering was led by principal investigators Dr. Sarah Meltzoff from the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science at the University of Miami, Dr. Cornelia E. Nauen, President of the International NGO *Mundus maris*, and by the Fisheries Centre's Dr. U. Rashid Sumaila. Ms. Ngaio Hotte, also from the Fisheries Centre, was the coordinator and facilitator for the roundtable and Ms. Vanessa Reid and Ms. Maria Scordialos, both from the Living Wholeness Institute, helped with the process design for the meeting. In attendance at the roundtable were 26 scientists, artists, musicians, and other creative and intellectually

inspired minds from a range of different backgrounds, coming together from home institutions and organizations based around the world. In addition to Dr. Sumaila and Ms. Hotte, participants also from the Fisheries Centre included

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- **Young researchers meet in Bellingham, WA**
- **A workshop on small-scale fisheries in Tanzania**
- **And as usual, plenty of news and notes**

Ms. Dyhia Belhabib, Dr. Nigel Haggan, Dr. Dana Miller, Dr. Deng Palomares, Dr. Daniel Pauly and Ms. Aylin Ulman.

The purpose of this meeting was to facilitate dialogue amongst individuals from varied disciplines and backgrounds around the subject that all participants shared a common passion for the ocean. It was hoped that the unique environment created through the blending of perspectives from science, the arts, and other diverse disciplines, cultures and practices would foster the creation of new ideas, projects and initiatives promoting positive change for our oceans and issues associated to ocean health.

The structure of the roundtable and flow of activities on each of the five days was carefully designed to promote deep and thoughtful discussion, discovery through sharing, and the gradual creation of feasible plans of action. Examples of techniques that were applied throughout this process were: appreciative inquiry (the sharing of positive 'success stories'), mind mapping, 'prouds and sorries' (the sharing of things that participants were proud or sorry of), travelling together on 'learning journeys' throughout the city of Vancouver, and finally a 'pro action café' which involved the discussion, development, marketing and planning of ideas for future projects. Each day began with a 'checking-in' and ended with a 'checking-out' process, which allowed everyone to reflect upon the experiences of each day and harvest the many different thoughts that had been evoked during activities and discussions.

On the fourth day of the roundtable, a public event entitled 'Conversation with the Ocean', organized jointly with a second Peter Wall Institute International Roundtable 'Bending the Knotted Oak', was held on Campus at the Roy Barnett Recital Hall. This event blended music, art and performance into an inspiring evening focused on the future of the oceans. Features included a masked performance by First Nations carver Beau Dick and his colleagues, a musical performance by Naomi Takagi with artwork from Robi Smith and a musical and visual performance of Voice of the Whale by David Maggs.


Throughout the week and in particular, during the 'mind mapping' exercise on day two, roundtable participants identified the following major themes that they felt represented the issues and challenges that are facing our oceans: resource over-exploitation, pollution, climate collapse, institutions, global capital, social inequality, human affect and



Beau Dick brought this candle holder supported by a curious mix of fish and four-legged land animal, which became the 'talking piece' for the week (© Cornelia E. Nauen)

emotions, and the connectedness of issues. Participants also identified a series of 'levers', or entry points for action; what they estimated as most promising to bring about change.

On the last day of the roundtable, participants were asked to contribute towards the creation of a book which will ultimately serve to document the process of the roundtable and some of the discussions and ideas that were produced throughout the five day meeting. This work-in-progress is currently being coordinated by Dr. Cornelia E. Nauen. A number of ideas for additional academic publications and projects were also discussed and participants that were interested in contributing towards each of these ideas exchanged contact information and created a plan for working together into the future.

In closing the roundtable, Drs. Sumaila, Meltzoff and Nauen along with Ms. Hotte spoke about their gratitude for the wonderful collaboration everybody had demonstrated thus helping to make this innovative meeting format a good experience. This was not only felt atmospherically, but also in terms of agreed practical activities spawned out of the conversations. One by one, participants then addressed where they had started, where they positioned themselves now, and how they intended individually and with others to move from call to action. All expressed awareness about the difficulty of carrying on once back to their everyday lives, but thought of practical ways to overcome the risk 

More information on [www.spaceshipearth.pwias.ubc.ca](http://www.spaceshipearth.pwias.ubc.ca)

## Community knowledge: young marine mammal researchers of the Pacific Northwest come together

By Mariana Diaz Gomez

The Northwest Student Chapter of the Society for Marine Mammalogy (NWSSMM) serves the community of marine mammal graduate and undergraduate students in Oregon,

Washington, Idaho, Alaska, and British Columbia.<sup>1</sup> Its primary activity is an annual meeting (held since 1996) that allows

<sup>1</sup> The Chapter's professional sponsors are Drs. Glenn VanBlaricom (University of Washington) and Andrew Trites (UBC).

students in the Pacific Northwest to meet in a relaxed atmosphere and share research ideas, interact, network, and discuss their academic triumphs in a supportive and informal setting.<sup>2</sup>

The meeting is a great way for all students and potential graduate students to share their experiences, either from the field or laboratory, or simply on what it is like to be a graduate student. Everyone is welcome to attend this meeting, as it is our goal to raise awareness on the remarkable marine mammal advances in research, and the implications they may have with regards to the conservation and management of the North Pacific species.

This year, the 18<sup>th</sup> NWSSMM meeting took place during the weekend of May 3–4 at the lovely campus of Western Washington University (WWU) in Bellingham, WA. There were over 50 attendees, including 12 graduate students who presented advances in several research areas such as seal tagging, whale bio-acoustics, and whale and seal energetics. Among these graduate students, the Fisheries Centre was well represented with PhD students Austen Thomas, Katie Hamen and Beth Volpov, and MSc students Elizabeth Goundie and myself. We all presented our work, and presentations can be found at [www.marinemammal.org/MMRU2](http://www.marinemammal.org/MMRU2).

The meeting began with the plenary guest speaker, Jared Towers, who talked about his very interesting research on BC cetaceans. Jared works as a research technician for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, at the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo, BC. His current work includes managing the Bigg's (transient) and northern resident killer whale photo-identification census programs. He is also a director and co-founder of the non-profit Marine Education and Research Society (MERS), based in Alert Bay, BC, which conducts research on minke and humpback whales, and provides educational programs in order to inform the public about marine wildlife.


<sup>2</sup> The Fisheries Centre has hosted several NWSSMM meetings in the past.



A few participants of the 17<sup>th</sup> NWSSMM during the celebratory dinner after the meeting at the University of Washington in 2013 (courtesy: M. Diaz Gomez).

A poster session was also held this year, during which ten undergraduates shared their honours projects and collaborative projects with researchers from their Universities or with other graduate students from the meeting. One of these posters highlighted very interesting work investigating polar bear hibernation and the locations of their dens in relation to human settlements in Greenland.

As usual, we gathered at the end of the meeting and went to a local restaurant for a celebratory dinner, where we socialized and discussed further about our research interests. In addition, there was a group outing on the day following the meeting to enjoy and learn much more about the place where the meeting was held. This year, there was the choice between a boat tour — with potentially some marine life sightings — and a hike.

Next year's meeting will be held for the first time at the University of Oregon in Eugene, OR .

## Economic viability for small-scale fisheries

By Anna Schuhbauer, Tracey Dennis and Joseph Luomba

A workshop was held in Bagamoyo (Tanzania) on April 23–25 2014 by Working Group 2 of 'Too Big To Ignore (TBTI) — A global network for Small-Scale Fisheries Research' (<http://toobigtoignore.net>), which focused on the economic viability of small-scale fisheries.


Small-scale fisheries are often marginalized and face many threats including climate change, globalization, competition from industrial fisheries and rapid market shifts. To be able to withstand these threats, fisheries need to be prepared. A major step towards achieving this is to help improve their economic viability, which we define as

being more than just financial (i.e., in terms of maximizing private profits) by including socio-economic criteria. A draft framework was developed as part of the first author's doctoral research, which will be used to find out what makes a small-scale fishery economically vulnerable to large-scale processes of change, and to try to find solutions to increase their resilience.

Working Group 2 is one of seven TBTI Working Groups distributed across all continents. It is in charge of conducting research that would help strengthen the base of small-scale fisheries with a focus on Africa, where economic

under-performance has been identified as one of the major problems facing small-scale fisheries.

The workshop was organized and hosted by Dr. Paul Onyango (2<sup>nd</sup> from right in photo) of the University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), in partnership with the Benguela Current Commission (Namibia), and was based on the aforementioned framework. Fisheries researchers and practitioners were invited from all over Africa. Seventeen people attended, twelve of whom presented small-scale fisheries case studies with a focus on economic viability. Participants consisted of professors, researchers from government institutions, NGOs, students and fishers, who came from Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa. They represented a wide diversity of people and topics, including both freshwater and marine small-scale fisheries.

The draft framework is currently being revised based on inputs received at the workshop, and will be made available through the TBTI network once finalized 



Some of the participants to the workshop enjoying a coconut delight, including Dr. Rashid Sumaila (3<sup>rd</sup> from left in photo; © Francis Nunoo).

## News & notes

### Congratulations

Dr. **Daniel Pauly** received an Honorary Doctorate from the Universidad de Cádiz on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Lisa Boonzaier** from the *Sea Around Us* successfully defended her MSc thesis on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, which focused on the effectiveness of marine protected areas. **Brianna Wright** from the *Marine Mammal Research Unit* also successfully defended her MSc thesis on June 11<sup>th</sup>, on the kinematics and acoustics of foraging behaviour in northern resident killer whales.



Dr. Pauly wearing the traditional outfit during his address at the graduation ceremony (courtesy: Universidad de Cádiz).

### Welcome

**Xueying Yin** is a new PhD student in the Changing Ocean Research Unit (supervised by Dr. **William Cheung**). She will be focusing on trade-offs of developing countries' marine fisheries under climate change.

**Lydia Teh** joined the *Sea Around Us* as the new Ocean Health Index (OHI) postdoc. As such, she will be working with Conservation International and the OHI team to generate the next round of OHI food provision scores.

### Farewell

Dr. **Longgen Guo** returned to his lab in China, after a year spent with the *Policy & Ecosystem Restoration in Fisheries* (PERF) group. **Chloé Orland** also left the PERF group; we wish her good luck with her future opportunities.

*FishBytes* is the newsletter of the Fisheries Centre at the University of British Columbia (UBC). It is published six times a year, and subscriptions are free of charge. Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Fisheries Centre or its members.

All queries, subscription requests and address-changes should be sent to the *FishBytes* editor, Frédéric Le Manach, at [fishbytes@fisheries.ubc.ca](mailto:fishbytes@fisheries.ubc.ca). For past issues, please visit the Fisheries Centre website [www.fisheries.ubc.ca](http://www.fisheries.ubc.ca) and follow the Publications link to *FishBytes*.

Our mailing address is UBC Fisheries Centre, Aquatic Ecosystems Research Laboratory, 2202 Main Mall, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6T 1Z4.

