

Report on Polar2018

Polar2018 was beyond my expectations, in terms of the connections made and the opportunities created. I am extremely grateful for funds from both my department (Gateway Antarctica, University of Canterbury) and AntEco, which allowed me to attend one of the most important conferences in my field.

My experience started with planning the conference, for which I decided to attend both the business meetings held prior to Open Science Conference (OSC) and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) OSC. At first, I was nervous to go to some of these pre-meetings as an early career researcher (ECR), but the conveners welcome ECR's into these meetings. I even got invited to participate in a potential new working group with SCAR Expert Group on Birds and Marine Mammals (EGBAMM), which will allow me to become involved with new projects. The OSC conference had not even begun and I was already gaining incredible opportunities, but the opportunities did not stop there.

During the OSC, I was able to talk to experts in my field from all over the world. Some of them even went out of their way to meet up with me and give me extra advice on methods and analysis techniques relevant to my PhD. I attended some of Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) World Summit 2018, where I met other ECR's and felt very motivated to increase my involvement with APECS. I have since applied to join the APECS Council. I also attended some very empowering meetings, including Women in Polar Science and a new group, called Polar Pride. I am planning on getting more involved with minority group meetings, including developing a sector on Mental Health.



Photo: Regina Eisert

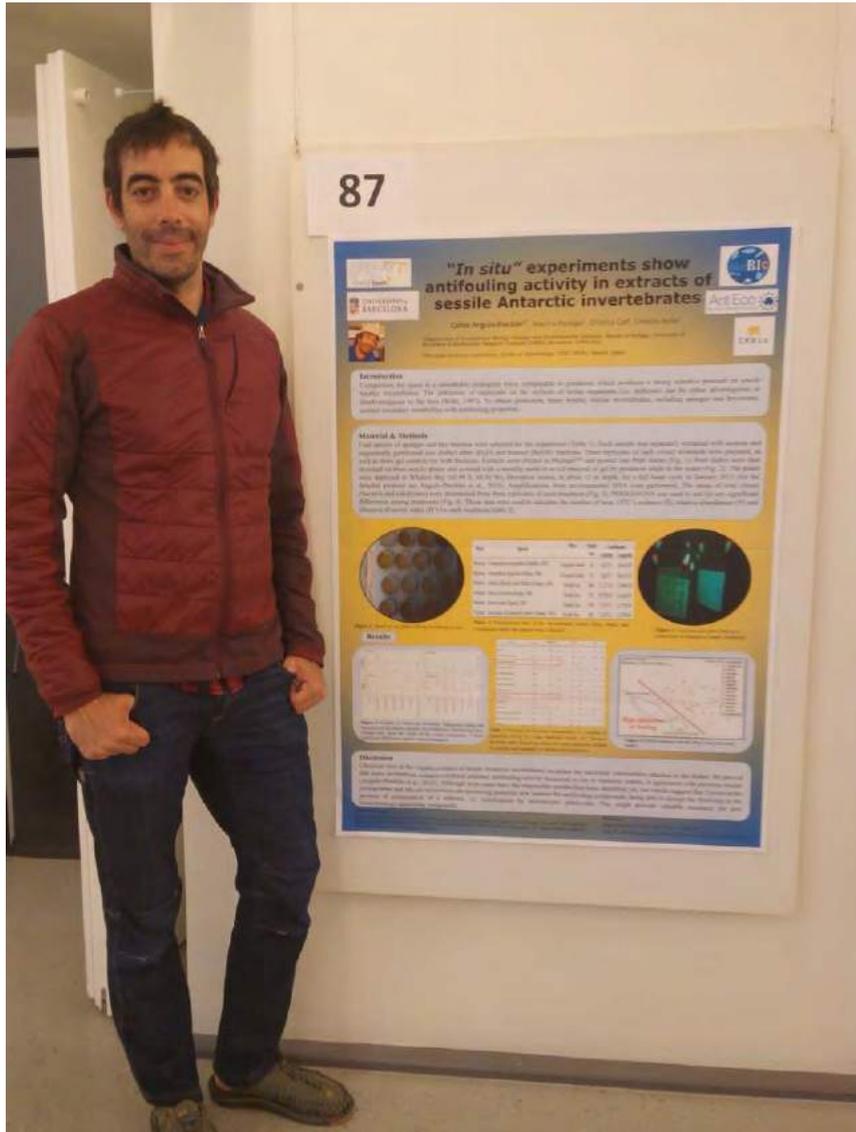
There were so many great experiences independent from what I came to Polar 2018 to do, an oral presentation. My oral presentation was the morning of the last day of the conference, so I had a lot of waiting to do. I was feeling slightly bad about not having many results, as my PhD is as much about developing a program for quicker analysis, as it is about the analysis. I was a bit worried, but mostly I was excited to get feedback from the community. The presentation went better than expected, as I got a lot of questions and feedback. I even got approached afterwards to be a potential researcher on an Antarctic research expedition,

with researchers whose research helped get my interested in my career. The project is in the developmental stage, but it was nice to be asked if I would be interested in joining.

Overall, this experience has allowed me to gain experience giving conference oral presentations, meet experts in my field, gain valuable advice that I would not otherwise have been able to obtain, and form new connections and collaborative projects. As a first year PhD student, this experience was an extremely valuable part of developing my career and becoming more involved in the polar research community. I am excited for the next step in my career process and hope to further develop the connections and projects discussed during Polar 2018.

Report on Polar2018: "Expedition in the third pole"

Attending the Scar conference held in Davos has been a very interesting and educational experience. It has served to strengthen contacts and possible new collaborations, as well as strengthen existing links and works with other researchers. It has also been a great experience to attend the new research studies that are on going in Antarctica. For all this I can only be grateful for the opportunity that Anteco has given to me.



Report on Polar2018

Being able to attend Polar 2018 provided a great experience. I attended the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists world summit on Monday. I was able to connect with other early career researchers, particularly with some people working in the arctic on microbiology and snow processes during a cross-polar development exercise.

I gave an oral presentation of my research, which was well attended and I received very good questions. It was good experience giving a talk and responding to questions. It also prompted very good conversation with a senior researcher working in my field, which was very beneficial for moving my research toward publication.

I was able to connect with some other researchers during the poster sessions and have great scientific discussion. Finally, I was able to join my colleagues and represent the McMurdo LTER at the meeting.



Report on Polar2018:

POLAR2018 was like most large conferences, and reminiscent of SCAR2016 – a whirlwind. One starts twinkly-eyed at the business meeting, with a list of people to meet, projects to discuss, and outings to plan, and by the end of the OSC, one has identified their favorite cocoon spot (top floor media room level, alcove next to the elevators, on a windowsill) to decompress from the social barrage and work or nap. And while I checked off most of the items on my naïve pre-meeting list, one is always left looking forward to the next meeting, and being their ‘better, gregarious self’ for 2020.

This meeting was different in many respects from SCAR2016, which was my first conference as a polar biologist. SCAR Biology had transpired, MEASO2018, and in the intervening years I’d completed my PhD and become heavily involved in APECS, currently serving on the ExCom this year. Because of this, POLAR had two Venn diagrams describing it – the APECS circle, and the science circle (Antarctic fish, population genetics and oceanography). Surprisingly, these circles did have quite a bit of overlap, which, in part, is the way it should be, and I’m looking forward to some exciting collaborations with folks I met through APECS, but then connected with through our science (and beers).

I continue to really enjoy the transgenerational connections afforded at POLAR between ECRs and more senior scientists, that deign (or should I say, realize we’re more fun) to hang out with, and many a collaboration has sprung from this sort of engagement (see my three months in Chizé, thanks Yan!). All in an all, it was a fantastic conference, with a lot of seeds blown to the wind that one hopes will come to some sort of fruition. Thanks very much to AntEco for your support in helping to get me to this conference, especially in this transitional time for me, where I’m between PhD and a future unnamed post doc.



Attending Polar2018 was a really enriching experience for many reasons. It was the first international conference I had attended. In fact, it was my very first conference, and I was amazed. Firstly, I was able to listen to the scientists doing leading-edge research on polar topics. I was surrounded by the most expert people on polar science, and, what was even more encouraging, I met people who were beginning what would be a brilliant scientific career on polar science.

Seeing many ECRs giving great talks inspired and encourage me to present one myself in coming conferences. One of the greatest opportunities Polar2018 offered me was to present for the first time my research in a conference. I presented a poster on my first work as a polar researcher in training. I could explain my work to several people who got interested in it, and I made contacts to some of them for future sharing of our work. Also, the conference was a perfect opportunity to meet, most of them in person for the first time, with my colleagues from APECS Spain, to discuss the guidelines for the re-activation of this organization. Moreover, I could meet and establish a link to members from many other APECS national committees.

The wide number of talks allowed me to attend many related to my topics of research. I made the most of these taking notes of ideas, experimental design, or results. Also, as an ECR working in Antarctica, I really appreciated getting a multidisciplinary view of this continent, which helped me contextualize the work of our team. Finally, I found brilliant the highlighting of social matters during the OSC, such as the view of Arctic indigenous people, and women and the LGBTQ+ community in polar science.



Report on Polar2018: "Expedition in the third pole"



On the morning of the 15 June 2018, my colleague and me met at the train station, with luggage, food, water and poster tubes. After more than 10 hours of travel, 4 trains, beautiful landscapes, we arrived at destination: the third pole! Indeed, this year, SCAR and IASC joined their Open Science Conference in the Alps, Davos, Switzerland, under the banner "Polar2018: Where the Poles come together".

After a very interesting side workshop about data management and next generation analyses, I started the conference with a lot of stress since I had a talk on the first day, in the first session! But it went well, I had great exchange of ideas, and I could finally be able to enjoy the other sessions, without stress!

To enjoy is the right term: the subjects were well grouped, I was able to attend to talks that were very close to my field and to other a little bit more distant, but all of them were very interesting and helped me to contextualize my work. During these days I met wonderful people, some stars I always read about, but also young budding stars with strong motivation and amazing ideas!

I came back to Belgium with new inspiration for my research and very nice memories!"

Report on Polar2018:

As early career researchers working on Antarctic case studies, attending SCAR conferences plays a crucial role to develop and integrate our projects within the Antarctic network. Polar 2018 was also the exceptional opportunity to combine and strengthen this network with the Arctic community. The conference was really helpful to open the scope of our research while being really productive with our already-existing network (related talks from peers, meeting during free time and side-events). Polar 2018 was finally the opportunity for us to present part of our results (1 talk and 5 posters) to a wide audience (3000 people), such an experience, thankfully possible with the ANTECO fellowship! =)



POLAR2018 was intense and lively. There were so many people, meetings, talks and posters but the whole event was full of great questions, interesting debate and ideas for collaborations and ways of working better together into the future. I was lucky enough to go to 3 days of side meetings prior to the conference starting. I saw how expert working groups like EG-BAMM and SOOS CAPS work as well as sitting in on AntEco and AntERA meetings to see how larger SCAR projects operate.

I presented 2 posters and had lots of people talk to me about my research and potential post-doc collaborations for once I'm finished. I made a huge number of new friends (and met up with lots of old ones) from all over the world and who work in all 3 poles!

Going to POLAR2018 was incredibly worthwhile for me at this crucial stage of my PhD and I know it will help springboard me into even better opportunities for greater research in Antarctica in the future. Thank you AntEco for this incredible chance to share my work with others in my field and those from further afield.



Thanks to AntEco for supporting my attendance to present at the recent POLAR2018 open science conference 'Where the poles come together'. This conference brought together international researchers in areas from all three poles: the Antarctic, Alpine and Arctic.

I used this fantastic opportunity to network with other polar scientists from within and outside the Antarctic 'pole' – meeting many other moss enthusiasts as well as connecting and reconnecting with fellow early career researchers.

My oral presentation was well received and generated a great discussion, boosting my confidence in the research that I am passionate about. Expanding my network is extremely important in paving my career path and attending this conference has further motivated me to broaden my horizons overseas.



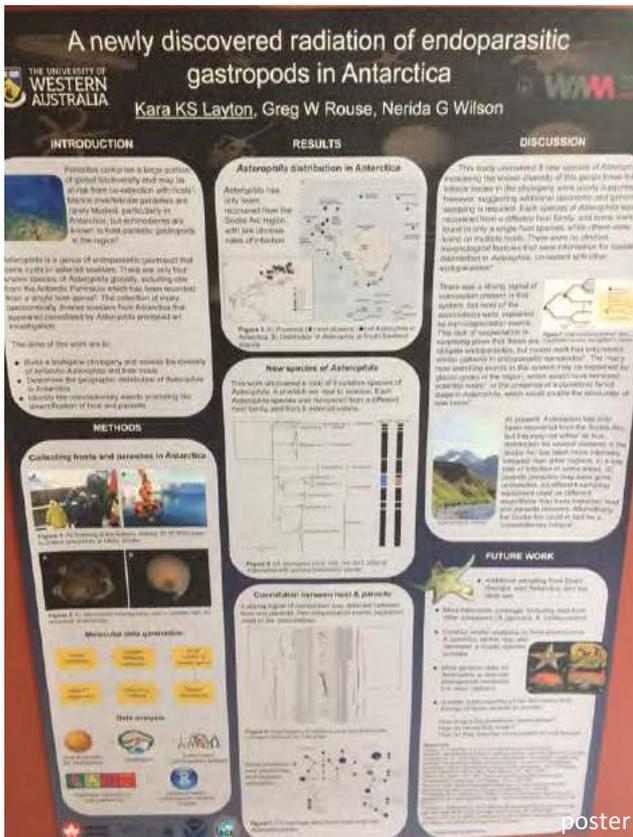
POLAR2018 Experience

Kara KS Layton

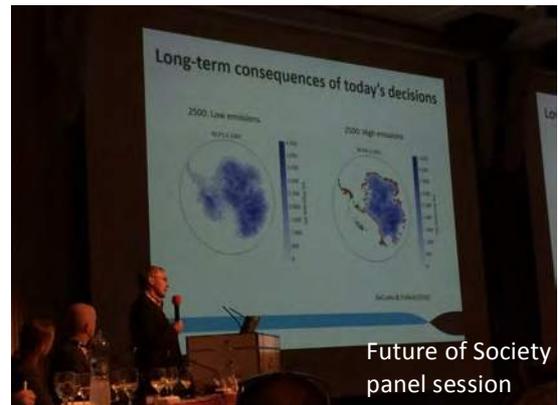
This was my first time attending a SCAR open science conference and it was an incredibly valuable experience. Not only did I get the opportunity to meet with and form new collaborations with researchers in my field of biology and genomics, but I also learned a great deal about Antarctic science in general. Attending talks outside of my field provided me with a more holistic understanding of Antarctica, particularly with regards to past climactic and glacial conditions, and has inspired me to develop interdisciplinary projects for the future. I also gained new knowledge about marine fieldwork planning at the APECS World Summit ECR workshop and I was also very pleased to be awarded a poster prize from APECS Oceania. I would not have been able to attend this conference if it wasn't for the generous funding from AntEco. Thank you!



Kara in Davos



poster



Future of Society panel session



poster award