

Shellfish -Our Undervalued Resource

- the conference to change perceptions about shellfish
University of Stirling UK 23-27th August 2011



Potential for Shellfish in Sub Saharan Africa ? Waiting production sites and potential markets?

The International Conference on Shellfish restoration (ICSR) now in its 26th year, finally arrives for the first time in the UK. The conference is held every alternate year in Charleston, South Carolina, USA but in the intervening years it is hosted elsewhere; it has been held in France, Ireland, the Netherlands and twice in Canada but never before in the UK.

The theme for this year's conference is "Shellfish – our undervalued resource". While shellfish are highly valued as a fishery and farmed product for food the organizers of the conference are keen to demonstrate that there are far wider values tied up in our shellfish stocks worldwide.

The concept of shellfish being an undervalued resource has sparked justifiable interest and a very interesting programme has emerged. The conference will open with [Dr Mel Austen](#) of MBL, Plymouth setting the scene by elaborating on economic valuation of shellfish in all their roles, reduction of climate stress, genetic resources, coastal protection, water quality enhancement and tourism to name just a few, while [Dr Robert Rheault](#), Executive Director of the East Coast Shellfish Growers Association and long time oyster grower will argue how these benefits accrue similarly from farmed shellfish. Arguably some of the benefits of natural formations of shellfish populations is less disease and [Dr Sarah Culloty](#) will give an overview on the current state of knowledge on oyster diseases so troubling currently. [Dr Luca van Duren](#) will give a plenary talk in the second session on shellfish as ecosystem engineers and [Prof. Gef Flimlin](#) will conclude the conference with a suitably upbeat presentation highlighting community involvement and how to engender this. The opening speaker for the final day which is devoted to oysters and how Europe can benefit from past experiences in USA, will be [Dr Mark Spalding](#) of the Nature Conservancy who have done so much to raise awareness on the value of shellfish reefs. He will be talking about global implications of oyster loss and the potential value of their restoration.

It will be a truly International conference with speakers from the Antipodes, Africa, Asia, all over Europe and the USA. The Crown Estate and Scottish Government have given generous support which in addition has allowed sponsorship of a small group of oyster farmers from the UK to allow them to learn from the USA experience in native oyster restoration and hopefully inspire them to try out a few methods themselves. Their presence at the ceilidh will also ensure there are enough demonstrators to get the reels off to a good start. But the band for the evening, [Ceilidh Minogue](#), are expert at teaching all that is needed and the ICSR have a great reputation as musical contributors to an evening's entertainment. So register now if you have not yet done so!

The draft programme has been put up on the conference web site www.aqua.stir.ac.uk/shellfish2011 but is subject to change.

Registration is still open but **Book now** to ensure you are comfortably accommodated on what is reputedly the most beautiful campus in the UK. Please register now at www.aqua.stir.ac.uk/shellfish2011 For More details contact Dr Janet Brown j.h.brown@stir.ac.uk

