

CIERP Travel Grant Reflection

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With the aid of a travel grant from CIERP, I was able to attend the Food Studies Conference in Prato, Italy in October, 2014. I was interested in attending the Food Studies conference because I hoped to link my research on fisheries management to the wider discussion about sustainable food systems. While such a link may seem obvious, there is surprisingly little dialogue between the sustainable seafood and sustainable agriculture communities (academic or professional). Indeed, my presentation was one of a very few dealing with fisheries, which ended up being a real plus from my standpoint. I was both able to bridge the aforementioned gap, and at the same time I was able to make some deep contacts with those few other fisheries researchers who presented in the same panel with me. It also meant that attendance at our panel was larger than anticipated, since it attracted anyone with fisheries interest.

I received very valuable feedback from my presentation, which covered the first chapter of my dissertation. The comments I received led to important changes not only in the content of my literature review, but also in the way I structured some of my argumentation. The conference also provided a valuable test run for presenting my research, which helped to prepare me for a job talk I would give the following month at the University of San Diego. I eventually was offered the assistant professor position I was interviewing for, and I am excited to join the USD faculty in August. I truly believe that the presentation of my work in Prato was a significant factor in securing my new position. I am extremely grateful to CIERP for both the amazing opportunity to present my research at an international conference, and for the positive impacts attending that conference had beyond my presentation!