

FIRST INTERNATIONAL MARINE CONSERVATION CONGRESS

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FORWARD

Daniel Pauly

The International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC) held at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, from May 17 to 24, 2009, was the first of its kind; and hence there is no point writing that it was the largest, or the best ever, though it probably would have been, were a comparison possible. The range of intellectual and practical issues tackled, the wide geographic and disciplinary breadth of the participants and presenters, and the informal discussion between sessions—all of these added up to an extraordinary event. In a sense, only a film, with several cameras flying from one room to the next, could have caught the excitement that it generated.

This makes it difficult for a set of five papers based on talks initially presented at the IMCC to convey the spirits of the whole event, yet they do, rigorous as they are.

This is due to their breadth, which ranges from the technical issue of reducing fisheries bycatch (Lewison et al. 2011) for dealing with the uncertainty that fogs up all our research and decision making (Bednarek et al. 2011), to the originality of their approaches for dealing with perennial issues, be it the establishment of MPA (Chuenpagdee et al. 2011), the fraught relationships between fisheries and conservation (Salomon et al. 2011), or the comparison, and continuation, between past and present fisheries, which is facilitated by the concept of “catch density” (Alexander et al. 2011).

As for the piece included here, derived from my keynote address at the IMCC, all I can say is that I was delighted to be asked to contribute it, as I was to give its oral counterpart. If anything, it meant I was there, and I can attest that the five other contributions included here are, well... synecdochic.

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ADDRESS: *Sea Around Us Project, 2202 Main Mall, Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6T 1Z4. E-mail: <d.pauly@fisheries.ubc.ca>.*

