

**2023 NF-POGO-Eurofleets+ Visiting Fellowship for
Shipboard Training hosted by the National Institute of Aquatic Resources
(DTU-Aqua)**

Fellowship Report

Name of Trainee: Maria Luz Torres Alberto

Name of Supervisor (Parent Institution): Marcelo Acha

Supervisor (Host Institution): Kai Wieland

Training Topic: Fisheries and Marine Ecology

Dates of Training: 17 August 2023 to 4 September 2023

Section A

(To be completed by the fellow)

It is the responsibility of the trainee to forward this form to the host and parent supervisor, and to submit a fully completed version to the POGO Secretariat. Please note that the complete report will be made public on the OTP website; Private comments should be included in a separate confidential form.

1) Please provide a brief description of activities during the training period:

I took part in the research cruise onboard the RV Dana in the North Sea. It is an International Bottom Trawl Survey (IBTS) that cooperates in the management of the fish population and the knowledge of the environmental state of the seas.

During the shipboard training, I worked in the fish lab. I was trained in the whole process of the bottom trawling (from when it entered the water to when it came out with the catch) learning about what to have in mind during the trawl, the fishing tracks, the bottom floor, the currents, etc. Once the catch was on board, I helped with the sorting and weighing. There were caught different species of fish, cephalopods, and crustaceans in catches. After classifying them and sometimes taking subsamples, measurements (length and weight) were made. Then I learned about how to collect otoliths, stomachs, and other biological information of the main commercial fishes and other invertebrate species.

Furthermore, during the cruise ichthyoplankton samples were taken by employing a MIK net, to study fish larvae and jellyfish. Samples were taken during the night, were sorted, species identified and measured on board.

2) What applications of the training received do you envision at your parent institution?

The training gave me technical experience in a bottom trawl survey. I learned about methodologies used in the acquisition of samples, decisions made onboard regarding the sampling, and also about the analysis of fish stocks in the North Seas. It was paramount in solidifying my education in fisheries and biological oceanography.

The gained experience will allow me to share and get more involved in the sampling collection during fisheries research cruises in my parent institution. I'm also looking forward to applying the knowledge and the new tools acquired for fisheries monitoring in my study area. In addition, I will share with my colleagues the experience and the methodology of data processing for the assessment of demersal fish stocks in the North Sea. Therefore, I will take advantage of all the knowledge acquired and transfer it to other fisheries studies in the Southwestern Atlantic Ocean.

3) Please provide your comments on the Fellowship Programme.

The NF-POGO-Eurofleets Shipboard Training Fellowship was a unique experience to learn and to improve my scientific education. I am very grateful for the opportunity of this training. The experience on board was truly enriching. Every member of the expedition on board RV Dana were very helpful and comprehensive during the work and the onboard life.

The Fellowship program provides a great opportunity for students and early career scientists. This program helps in the education and experience, to learn new techniques, meet new perspectives, build collaboration networks with other countries. I am looking forward to continuing to be part of future opportunities. Once again, I feel so grateful for the opportunity and the support.

PRINT NAME

Maria Luz Torres Alberto

Date: 28/ 09/ 2023

Section B

(To be completed by the host supervisor and returned to the trainee)

Please note that the complete report will be made public on the OTP website; Private comments should be included in a separate confidential form.

1) Please provide your comments on the performance of the trainee.

We were very pleased with the performance of Maria during our survey. She got very fast integrated in the scientific team as well as with the vessel crew. She got engaged in all scientific and social activities. Although more experienced working with modelling she became very soon an essential help in the fish lab and independently search background material from the literature we had on board on species composition and fish biology. In addition to the work in the fish lab, she joined the recording of oceanographic data (CTD cast for measuring temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen content and chlorophyll) as well as the plankton sampling and sorting of these samples for fish larvae and jellyfish.

2) Is this exchange likely to lead to future collaboration with the trainee's parent institution? If so please give example(s) of how this collaboration may be pursued.

There is no formal agreement for future collaboration with the trainee's parent institution now.

3) Please provide your comments on the Fellowship Programme.

Despite the extra effort needed for the selection of the candidate and for the formal preparation of the survey, I appreciated having a trainee onboard very much. We felt enriched having a person from a non-European country with a different cultural joining us on our cruise.

PRINT NAME

Kai Wieland

Date: 27 /09/2023

SECTION C

(To be completed by the parent supervisor and returned to the trainee)

Please note that the complete report will be made public on the OTP website; Private comments should be included in a separate confidential form.

1) Do you agree with the above comments and do you have any additional feedback you wish to provide?

Yes, I totally agree, Maria Luz is a very independent and curious person, and I am not surprised she involved in other tasks in addition to those that were assigned.

I know it was a great experience for her, it was her first opportunity to work with foreign colleagues, and surely it aids growing her academic and research career. She returned very enthusiastic and fully of energy to continue her work. Finally, I'd like to thank the NF-POGO-Eurofleets Shipboard Training Fellowship granted to María Luz and to the danish colleagues with whom she shared the cruise.

PRINT NAME

E. Marcelo Acha

Date: 29/09/2023