Conference Agenda

Monday September 8th

14:00 - 16:00	Roundtable	Sponge genomics and metagenomics	

Tuesday September 9th

08:00 - 09:00	**Registration**		
09:00 - 09:30	**Welcome to the Sponge Conference**		
	Theme 2. Sponge symbioses		
09:30 - 10:00	Keynote speaker	Jörn Piel	Insights into the chemistry of sponge microbiomes.
10:00 - 10:30	Oral Communication	Tal Idan	Marine heatwaves undermine sponge holobiont stability: Insights from microbiome and metabolome shifts.
	Oral Communication	Sofia Paraskevopoulou	Freshwater sponges acquired anaerobic cofactor biosynthesis genes from microbes.
10:30 - 11:00	**Coffee break**		
11:00 - 12:30	Oral Communication	Bettina Glasl	Assimilation of branched-chain amino acids by ammonia-oxidizing archaeal symbionts of marine sponges.
	Oral Communication	Berta Pintó	Exploring cyanobacteria contributions to sponge metabolism during simulated predation.
	Oral Communication	Marta Turon	Phagocytosis of an obligate symbiont supports embryonic nutrition in *Halichondria panicea*.
	Oral Communication	David Ngugi	Integrated gene and genome catalogues of the global sponge microbiome.
	Oral Communication	Ute Hentschel	The genomic basis of sponge-microbe symbioses: Using comparative genomics to reveal ancient principles in metazoan-microbe symbioses.
	Flash Talk	Francesca Strano	Microbiome flexibility underpins sponge resistance to past and future ocean deoxygenation.
	Flash Talk	Adena Collens	Life in a glass house: The evolution & ecology of deep-sea Glass sponge microbiomes.
	Flash Talk	Detmer Sipkema	The biosynthetic landscape of marine sponges.
	Flash Talk	Malcolm Hill	Analysis of factors influencing features of the bioeroding sponge holobiont *Cliona*:*Gerakladium* across seasons, depth, and following a mass bleaching event.
	Flash Talk	Marie Rutsch	Visualization of the spatial metabolome and symbiont distribution in *Ianthella basta*.
12:30 - 13:30	**Lunch**		
13:30 - 14:00	**Poster Session 1**		

14:00 - 14:15	Flash Talk	Almudena Álvarez Fernández	One phylum, two worlds: Microbiome contrasts in freshwater and marine sponges.
	Flash Talk	André C. Pereira	*Rhodothermota* in marine sponges: Phylogenomic diversification and functional adaptation to a host-associated lifestyle.
	Flash Talk	Preeti Antonetta Pereira	Macrofaunal assemblages associated with the intertidal demosponge, *Cinachyrella cavernosa* (Lamarck, 1815) (Heteroscleromorpha: Tetractinellida: Tetillidae) from Goa, West coast of India.
	Theme 6. Biotechnological applications		
14:15 - 15:30	Oral Communication	Benedicta Ngwakum	Evaluation of antimicrobial potential of crude fractions extracts isolated from South African marine sponges.
	Oral Communication	Subhash Yadav	Advancing the culturing of *Geodia barretti* sponge cells and their bacterial symbionts.
	Oral Communication	Megan Conkling	In vitro production of (+)-curcudiol and (+)-curcuphenol from the marine sponge *Didiscus* sp. induced by thermal stress.
	Oral Communication	Anita Kubiak	Iron-Spongin composites: achievements, trends and challenges.
	Flash Talk	Marcela Loy Martinez	Sponge hybridoma technology: Enabling continuous cell division in non-dividing, compound producing species.
15:30 - 16:00	**Coffee break**		
16:00 - 17:00	Oral Communication	Hermann Ehrlich	The enigma of spongin and discovery of collagen I and III within its structure.
	Oral Communication	Marina Pozzolini	Genomic and transcriptomic insights into the fibrillar collagen gene repertoire of the marine sponge *Chondrosia reniformis* Nardo, 1847.
	Flash Talk	Serena Federico	*Petrosia* (*Petrosia*) *ficiformis* (Poiret, 1789) sponge cell: a model for the sponge cell culture optimization.
	Flash Talk	Zineb Souiba	Biochemical analysis and evaluation of the antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and healing properties of the marine sponge *Suberites domuncula* (Olivi, 1792).
	Flash Talk	Emmanouela Vernadou	Towards sustainable sponge farming: a combined ecological and experimental approach.
	Flash Talk	Pere Ferriol	Novel supercritical fluid extraction of bioactive brominated tyrosine alkaloids from *Aplysina aerophoba* cultured in an integrated multi-trophic aquaculture system.
17:00 - 17:30	**Art & Science session**		
	Oral Communication	Julie Semoroz & Vinicius Fernandes	Echoes of the Ocean, sonifying the hidden sound identity of sponge species (Demospongiae, Dictyoceratida, Spongiidae).
	Flash Talk	Pedro Cunha	Weird fishes Archive
	Flash Talk	Ana Sofia Ribeira	No Bottom Trawling Zone: sponges as radical limits
	Flash Talk	Maria Catarina Silva	Spicule Veil: Studies

Wednesday September 10th

Theme 1. Ecosystem function and services

09:00 - 09:30	Keynote speaker	Jasper de Goeij	The sponge holobiont brings life to shallow and deep marine ecosystems.

09:30 - 10:30	Oral Communication	Dana Milena Liendo Roggia	Ecological role and population trends of *Hymeniacidon perlevis* (Montagu, 1814) in a highly impacted Patagonian bay.
	Oral Communication	James Bell	Sponges in hot water: the impact of marine heatwaves (MHWs) on temperate marine sponges.
	Oral Communication	Tanja Stratmann	Combining ^{13}C, ^{15}N, and ^{2}H to measure feeding and metabolic activity in marine, shallow-water sponges – A pilot study.
	Flash Talk	Emma Novak	Do sponges fuel food webs in temperate mesophotic ecosystems?
	Flash Talk	Rohde Sven	Hot waters, shifting power: Experimental insights into coral–sponge interactions under heat stress.
	Flash Talk	Christopher Freeman	Emergent Caribbean sponges produce detritus that supports diverse detritivore communities.
10:30 - 11:00	**Coffee break**		
11:00 - 12:30	Oral Communication	David Amptmeijer	DOM consumption and demethylation in HMA sponges: key drivers of low MeHg in Mediterranean Sea benthic fish.
	Oral Communication	Marie Derrien	Sponge contribution to chemical seascapes: insights from Mediterranean caves opening up new perspectives on the functioning of marine ecosystems.
	Oral Communication	Ulrike Hanz	Biogeochemical cycling within a deep-sea sponge ground: Hydrodynamic control of benthic boundary layer fluxes.
	Oral Communication	Nicole de Voogd	A quarter of a century of sponge biodiversity and functioning in the Spermonde archipelago: Impacts of eutrophication and environmental change.
	Oral Communication	Janie Wulff	Collaboration among sponges rebuffs aggressive competitors and habitat-wreckers in other phyla.
	Flash Talk	Ludi Parwadani Aji	Sponge cover and functional roles in semi-isolated marine lake ecosystems along temperature and terrestrial input gradient.
12:30 - 13:30	**Lunch**		
13:30 - 14:00	**Poster Session 1**		
	Theme 8. Conservation and restoration		
14:00 - 15:30	Oral Communication	Gabriela Wood	Multispecies approach shows high tolerance of temperate marine sponges to nitrogenous fertilizer.
	Oral Communication	Jan Vicente	Lost before found: Assessing diversity and abundance loss of the Hawaiian sponge cryptofauna in a changing climate.
	Oral Communication	Inês Gregório	Are deep-sea sponges at risk? Conservation assessment of *Pheronema carpenteri* and the habitats it forms.
	Oral Communication	Andrea Corral Lou	Spatial and seasonal biodiversity variation in a large Mediterranean lagoon using environmental DNA metabarcoding through sponge tissue collection.
	Oral Communication	Bobbie Renfro-Price	The roles of changing oceanic conditions and restoration in altering coral reef sponge populations in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Florida, USA.
	Flash Talk	Barbara Graham	High thermal thresholds to extreme marine heatwaves for tropical sponges from two abiotically contrasting sites.
	Flash Talk	Noah Alexander Gorman	Efficacy of diets in commercial bath sponges.
	Flash Talk	Andia Chaves Fonnegra	Sponge communities prevail after thermal anomalies.

	Flash Talk	Stephanie Archer	Sponges as passive samplers for heavy metals in freshwater and brackish systems.
	Flash Talk	Joana Xavier	The IUCN SSC Sponge Specialist Group.
15:30 - 16:00	**Coffee break**		
16:00 - 17:30	Oral Communication	Bárbara Ribeiro	Sponges as reef allies: Untapping the potential of enhancing restoration through sponge filtration and nutrient enrichment.
	Oral Communication	Vasilis Gerovasileiou	Enhancing sponge conservation efforts in the Mediterranean Sea.
	Oral Communication	Megan Russell	Integrating genetics in sponge community restoration.
	Oral Communication	Xenia Sarropoulo	Conservation genomics of the bath sponge *Spongia officinalis*: expanding insights into population diversity and adaptive potential.
	Oral Communication	Jordi Grinyó	Scaling up deep-sea sponge restoration: Large-scale culture of continental shelf and slope species in the Mediterranean.
	Flash Talk	Marina Biel	A novel acrylic-sand anchoring technique for the restoration of *Axinella* spp.
21:00 - 22:00	**Open public session**		

Thursday September 11th

Theme 5. Organismal Biology

09:00 - 09:30	Keynote speaker	April Horton	The flexible life of freshwater sponge-algal relationships: Molecular pathways and environmental cues driving endosymbiotic integration.
09:30 - 10:30	Oral Communication	Kseniia Skorentseva	Porifera ROCK: actomyosin contraction orchestrates morphogeneses in sponges.
	Oral Communication	Raz Marom	What you measure is what you get? Methodological gaps in sponge metabolism assessment.
	Oral Communication	Cole Easson	Assessing quantity and specificity in picoplankton diets of Caribbean sponges.
	Flash Talk	Andrey Lavrov	Contribution of cell proliferation to intact tissue homeostasis and regeneration in sponges.
	Flash Talk	Yulia Kraus	Supracellular migration as a strategy to coordinate cell behavior: Insights from asexual reproduction in sponges.
	Flash Talk	Elena Andronova	When the sessile starts to move: Stolonial budding in the carnivorous sponge *Lycopodina hypogea*.
10:30 - 11:00	**Coffee break**		
11:00 - 12:30	Oral Communication	Sally Leys	Sponge eyes: Evidence for a photoreceptor in the Calcareous sponge amphiblastula larva.
	Oral Communication	Elena Voronezhskaya	Dopaminylation of actin in sponges: A non-neural pathway for regulation of collective cell migration.
	Oral Communication	Lars Kumala	Oxygen regulation in early animals: Insights from spatiotemporal oxygen imaging in *Halichondria panicea* and *Haliclona rosea* demosponges.
	Oral Communication	Manuel Maldonado	How silicification shaped the evolutionary history of Porifera.

	Oral Communication	Jose María Lorente-Sorolla	Diverse systems and ancient origins of sex determination genes in sponges.
	Flash Talk	Vanessa Ho	Evolution of ATP-mediated contraction in marine and freshwater sponges.
	Flash Talk	Florian Moeller	MERFISH spatial transcriptomics of anaerobic-energy metabolism-associated pathways in the demosponge *Halichondria panicea*.
	Flash Talk	Emilio Lanna	What determines the egg size in Porifera? Evolutionary history, life history, and environmental implication on one of the most important animal cells.
	Flash Talk	Amanda Kahn	Observations of sponge behaviors in response to food, flow, and season.
	Flash Talk	Daniele Stillitani	Cellular diversity of the marine sponge *Darwinella* sp. (Dendroceratida, Keratosa).
12:30 - 13:30	**Lunch**		
13:30 - 14:00	**Poster Session 2**		
	Theme 7. Sponges in Human history		
	Keynote speaker	Eleni Voultsiadou	Sponges in Ancient Greece: value for humans and the roots of sponge science.
	Oral Communication	Stephen Kolomyjec	Porifera the people: A deep dive into North America's freshwater sponge research.
14:00 - 15:30	Oral Communication	Ana Sofia Soares	Deep-sea sponges of the Portuguese shelf: Insights from fishers' ecological knowledge.
	Oral Communication	Donat Petricioli	The uncertain future of sponge fishing in Croatia.
	Flash Talk	Caterina Longo	An updated overview of the sponge fauna of the Adriatic Sea.
	Flash Talk	Tatjana Bakran-Petricioli	First evidence of sponge remains as funerary objects in an archaeological context: insights into their identity and origin.
15:30 - 16:00	**Coffee break**		
16:00 - 17:30	Side event	WPD editor meeting	
	Roundtable	Sponges and Climate Change	

Friday September 12th

	Theme 3. Taxonomy and systematics		
09:00 - 09:30	Keynote speaker	Sven Zea	Sponge taxonomy in the sea of the New World: From expeditions and museum collections to SCUBA, underwater photography and internet, and from morphological to integrative approaches.
	Oral Communication	Christine Schönberg	Mom, are we there yet? Can AI speed up sponge spicule analyses?
	Oral Communication	Niels van der Windt	Integrative taxonomy reveals new Petrosiidae (Order Haplosclerida) species from Sulawesi, Indonesia.
09:30 - 10:30	Oral Communication	Paco Cardenas & Julio A. Díaz	10 years after the revised classification of the Demospongiae.
	Flash Talk	Alex Liu	A 548 million year old crown group sponge from the Ediacaran Nama Group of Namibia offers insights into the evolution of spiculogenesis.

	Flash Talk	Dorte Janussen	New species of Cladorhizidae (sponges) and insights into the diversity and distribution of carnivorous deep-sea sponge.
	Flash Talk	Isabella França-Lima	Integrative taxonomy and biogeographic affinities of calcareous sponges (Porifera: Calcarea) from Eastern Antarctica.
10:30 - 11:00	**Coffee break**		
11:00 - 12:30	Oral Communication	Swee-Cheng Lim	Sponge natural history collections in Southeast Asia.
	Oral Communication	Thomas Turner	Integrative sponge taxonomy in California: advancing in the face of taxonomic impediments and cryptic species.
	Oral Communication	Joana Sandes	Uncovering hidden Demospongiae biodiversity in Brazilian submarine caves using molecular and morphological data.
	Oral Communication	Dirk Erpenbeck	DNA taxonomy of sponges - where are we now?
	Oral Communication	Marie Grenier	Spongiidae from the Indian and Pacific Oceans: putative new species and new arguments to overturn systematics.
	Flash Talk	Matheus Vieira Lopes	Finding a needle in a haystack: morphological support of a monophyletic group in Calcaronea (Porifera: Calcarea).
	Flash Talk	Sara Emilly Pereira	Refining the systematics of Calcaronea: split of *Sycettusa* and new insights on the family Heteropiidae (Porifera: Calcarea).
	Flash Talk	Anisa Toska	Hexactinellida of the Sagami Bay - revisited.
	Flash Talk	Pelayo Baragaño González	A new species of *Rhabderemia* (Porifera: Rhabderemiidae) from Galicia Bank (NW Spain).
	Flash Talk	Maria Eduarda Santos	Diversity of Calcinea (Porifera: Calcarea) from Heron Island, Great Barrier Reef: endemic species and trans-Pacific distributions.
12:30 - 13:30	**Lunch**		
13:30 - 14:00	**Poster Session 2**		
14:00 - 14:30	Roundtable	The World Porifera Database	
		Theme 4. Biodiversity and Biogeography	
14:30 - 15:30	Oral Communication	Eduardo Leal Esteves	Sponges from a marine biodiversity hotspot in the Southeast coast of Brazil.
	Oral Communication	Anita George	Sea sponges of India: Biodiversity and biogeographic insights.
	Oral Communication	César Ruiz	20 year-long survey of the sponge fauna in artificial underwater caves.
	Flash Talk	Alfredo Marchiò	New hadal observation of Glass sponges (Porifera: Hexactinellida).
	Flash Talk	Nisit Ruengsawang	Biodiversity assessment of freshwater sponges in Songkhram River, Northeast Thailand.
	Flash Talk	Verity Nye	The Ocean Census: How new species discovery can advance your work and how you can shape the programme.
	Flash Talk	Yen-Huei Li	Undiscovered sponge diversity in Taiwan.

	Flash Talk	Camille Leal	Molecular biodiversity of mesophotic and deep sponges off the Southern coast of the continental United States of America (USA).
15:30 - 16:00	**Coffee break**		
	Oral Communication	Claire Goodwin	Filtering in the cold darkness: the unique sponge biodiversity of the Saguenay Fjord, Canada.
	Oral Communication	Laura De la Cruz Castillejo	Genomic connectivity and adaptation signals of the freshwater sponge *Ephydatia muelleri* across its distribution.
	Oral Communication	Carles Galiá	Nuclear and mitochondrial data reveal complex evolutionary patterns on the deep-sea engineering bubarid *Phakellia ventilabrum* in the Northeast Atlantic.
	Oral Communication	Toufiek Samaai	Modelling spatial distribution of some sponge taxa collected as bycatch during routine research trawl surveys to inform marine spatial planning.
16:00 - 17:30	Oral Communication	Carlota Gracia-Sancha	Genomic insights into species delimitation and population structure of Atlanto-Mediterranean *Phakellia* spp.
	Flash Talk	Thanos Dailianis	Unraveling regional patterns of sponge assemblages in the Greek Seas: A habitat-structured baseline.
	Flash Talk	Tze Ning Orczy Wan	An endolithic quest: Probing for temperature limits of sponge bioerosion.
	Flash Talk	Yuji Ise	Hidden diversity of submarine cave sponges in the Ryukyu Islands, southwestern Japan.
	Flash Talk	Ulisses Pinheiro	Biodiversity of sponges and their associated bryozoan fauna on shipwrecks and adjacent rhodolith beds in Pernambuco, Brazil.

Saturday September 13th

	Oral Communication	Tom Morav	Refugia, but not for everyone: Different connectivity patterns in *Axinella polypoides* and *Ircinia variabilis*.
	Oral Communication	Maria Cristina Diaz	Biodiversity of Porifera in mesophotic coral ecosystems from the Northwest Atlantic tropical and temperate provinces: 14 years of exploration.
	Oral Communication	Robert Cassidy	Sponge nsDNA recovers the full metazoan community from an important fishing area in the North Atlantic.
10:00 - 11:00	Oral Communication	Dana Goldwasser	Exploring poriferan community composition in the Galápagos: Environmental and biogeographic impact.
	Flash Talk	Linnet Busutil	Is there variation between sponges in the upper and middle zones of Mesophotic Coral Ecosystems in Cuba?
	Flash Talk	Javier Cristobo	Preliminary results of deep-sea sponges collected by the 2025 Ocean Census Expedition conducted around the South Sandwich Islands (Antarctic)
	Flash Talk	Markos Digenis	Exploring sponge biodiversity in the Ionian and Aegean Seas: Insights from the 2024 SponBIODIV sampling campaign.
11:00 - 11:30	Roundtable	The future of sponge science	
11:30 - 12:00	**Conference Closing**		