

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

Expedition/Project/

Conference Title: Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) Annual Meeting 2015

Travel Dates: July 10th to July 17th

Location: Hawaii, USA

Group member(s): Julieth Serrano Atuesta

Aims: Give an oral presentation on the development of conservation policies at the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) annual meeting 2015

OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-

Thanks to the financial support provided by the James Rennie Bequest I attended the ATBC annual meeting 2015 in Hawaii. This meeting is a major event in the field of conservation biology. It gathers renowned scientists from disciplines such as biogeography, evolution, forest management, and ecology. This year the meeting focused on topics of rapid development and high interest to societies: "Resilience of Island Systems in the Context of Climate Change: Challenges for Biological and Cultural Diversity and Conservation", giving special attention to the connection between the conservation of biotic resources and the conservation of cultural richness.

I attended several symposia during the meeting, as part of the audience, and I also gave an oral presentation. My talk was on a proposal for the implementation of community based conservation strategies, using one of the most diverse areas on earth, the Neotropical lowland rain forests of Colombia, as a study case. This project is a personal initiative and it is not a part of the objectives of my doctoral research. The feedback provided by fellow researchers and the opportunity to interact with academics working on similar initiatives enriched my knowledge and strengthened my presentation skills.

Experienced academics offered a mentoring programme that aimed to give advice to young scientists. Guidance was given on presentation skills, how to write a CV and academic paths after finishing a PhD. On this programme I took part on short workshops and relevant discussion sessions that widened my perspective on areas that will enhance my personal and academic development.

Initiatives such as the James Rennie Bequest open doors for an integral formation of postgraduate students, and I will like to thank once again the committee for its support and for facilitating my participation on events of global importance for my fields of interest.