

Summary report: SSHL supports Ronald Lloren (ETH ZÜRICH-EAWAG) to attend the IAL-IPA conference in Bariloche, Argentina

After years of postponement due to the pandemic, the on-site 15th symposia of the joint meeting of the International Association of Limnogeology (IAL) and International Paleolimnology Association (IPA) was finally materialized. The gathering of more than 300 scientists studying on lakes around the world with the theme “*Lakes as memories of the past*” took place in Bariloche, Argentina which started from the 27th of November to the 1st of December 2022.

I am forever grateful to the generous support of the Swiss Society for Hydrology and Limnology (SSHL), particularly from the encouragement fund for young researchers. From which I was able to participate in the conference and share my study. I presented part of my PhD work as an oral presentation entitled “*The voyage of Humans in the South Pacific: the view from Lake Lanotō, Sāmoa*”.

The lake sediment record that I am working on dates back to more than 50,000 years before present (BP) - a unique and long record in the South Pacific. In my talk, I presented the period of the known human arrival in Samoa (based on archaeological data) around 4,000 years BP. Changes in grain size, total organic carbon, nitrogen and carbon isotopes, including Titanium (Ti) and Aluminium (Al) from micro-XRF scanning were presented and discussed. The trends reflected in the sediment record were used as proxies to interpret past environmental changes before and after human arrival in the area.

The convention broadened my perspective towards my topic and in other disciplines across my niche. In understanding better the proxies that I am using, particularly on fecal sterols which are used as human tracers on island migration. I was also engrossed in the discussions on the use of elemental proxies derived from micro XRF core scanner. One highlight of the meeting for me was during the poster sessions, a venue for engagements and discussions, where I got to interact with other scientists on their works. I eagerly asked questions about pollen and charcoal analysis as they could be useful in my current work.

I was also delighted to see former acquaintances who became friends along the way. Aside from meeting friends, I am happy to have established new friendships and collaborations with students, early career researchers and professors, for topic discussions and future work. As one of the speakers in the event said: "This changing world is a great opportunity for us scientists to study collectively the environment in the changing climate across the globe".

It was my first time in South America. I couldn't be happier that I experienced it in Argentina where I was immersed in their rich culture and food, and the warmth of its people. My journey in attending the IPA IAL conference has been profoundly deep academically and culturally. It was a holistic conference. Thank you SSHL for this unforgettable and enriching opportunity!



Ronald Lloren presenting his work during an oral presentation. Photo credit: Prof Dr Nathalie Dubois.