

## The Seventh European Phycological Congress held in Croatia in August 2019

Scientists from Europe and throughout the world gathered in Zagreb, Croatia, from 25 to 30 August 2019, to attend the Seventh European Phycological Congress, EPC7, (<http://epcseven.biol.pmf.hr/>). The event attracted a diverse audience of academic and government professionals as well as students to discuss all aspects of phycology including basic research, technological development, education, environment protection and legislation, sustainable energy, education and popularization of science.

The Croatian Botanical Society was the main congress organizer. The organization was supported by the Federation of European Phycological Societies (FEPS), an organization of which the Croatian Botanical Society is also a member. EPC series started in Cologne in 1996, and since then has been organized each four years in the following cities – Montecatini, Belfast, Oviedo, Rhodes, London and now in Zagreb. It has become a central and one of the most important meeting points of phycologist from not just Europe, but from countries all around the world. The most interesting feature of EPC in general, is that it brings together experts from all fields of phycology (including cyanobacteria and algae).

EPC7 was organized in three parallel sessions with contributed papers and poster presentations in 18 symposia (<http://epcseven.biol.pmf.hr/list-of-symposia/>). There were two workshops and one satellite symposium organized, and

series of social events (<http://epcseven.biol.pmf.hr/social-events/>).

EPC7 hosted 432 participants from 46 countries (Figure 1), who presented their research in 163 oral and 243 poster presentations (Figure 2). The plenary lectures were presented by world-known scientists and researchers, including Debashish Bhattachary (Rutgers University, USA), Assaf Vardi (Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel), Laura Airoldi (University of Bologna, Italy) and Myriam Valero (Station Biologique de Roscoff, France). An invited lecture on “Change of climate and occurrence of extremes” by Mirko Orlić, member of Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and professor at the Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb, discussed topics associated with climate change and the more frequent occurrence of weather extremes. The lecture was moderated by Paula Bontempi, from NASA Headquarters, Washington D.C. After the lecture, the audience was invited to take part in the discussion on the following topics: (i) Do we have the observations to support understanding, monitoring, and modeling past, present, and future climate change and its impacts? (ii) What is underknown in our understanding of Earth’s climate? (iii) Are there strategies for mitigating climate change?

The great potential of EPC7 can be seen in the number of the students, who make up over one-third of all participants.



Fig. 1. EPC7 participants on King Tomislav Square in Zagreb. Photo Renata Horvat.

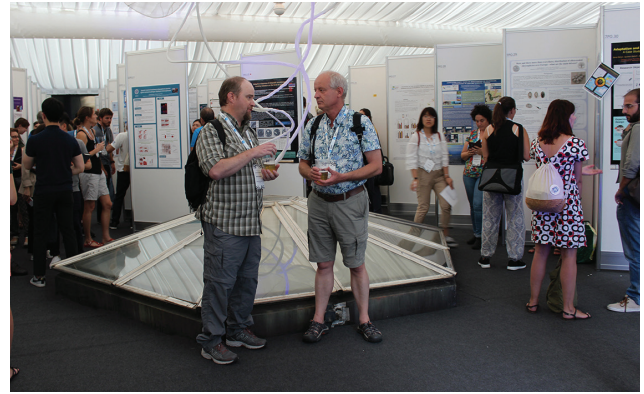


Fig. 2. EPC7 participants presented their research in 163 oral and 243 poster presentations. Photo Renata Horvat.

One of the congress symposia was dedicated for students to meet editors of scientific journals, learn about fellowship opportunities and international project applications. Representatives of important European scientific research agencies including Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and European Research Council (ERC) presented their programs and funding possibilities. The extraordinary broad range of topics covered by the symposia chaired by leading European researchers includes a special biotechnology symposium focused on ties between science and industry, and a symposium on biodiversity and special characteristics of the Adriatic Sea.

The Academy of Fine Arts of the University in Zagreb organised three exhibitions in art galleries in the city centre of Zagreb – Gallery Šira, Forum and Institut Français de Croatie. In Šira and Forum the exhibition „The Beauty in Detail, Transformation and Structure – Adriatic Coccolithophores” (<http://efk.alu.hr/>) was set up for the third time including new, never seen before art work (please see more about the exhibition in social news, *Acta Botanica Croatica* 78/1) (Figure 3). Institut Français de Croatie hosted the exhibition “Microscopiques reliques” by Isabelle RocheMars (<http://isabelle.rochemars.free.fr/>) (Figure 4). The exhibitions were opened during EPC7 and had wide interest of all participants.



Fig. 3. The exhibition „The Beauty in Detail, Transformation and Structure – Adriatic Coccolithophores” was open for all visitors of Gallery Šira and Forum in Zagreb. Photo Renata Horvat.

Fig. 4. Institut Français de Croatie hosted the exhibition “Microscopiques reliques” by Isabelle RocheMars. Photo Renata Horvat.



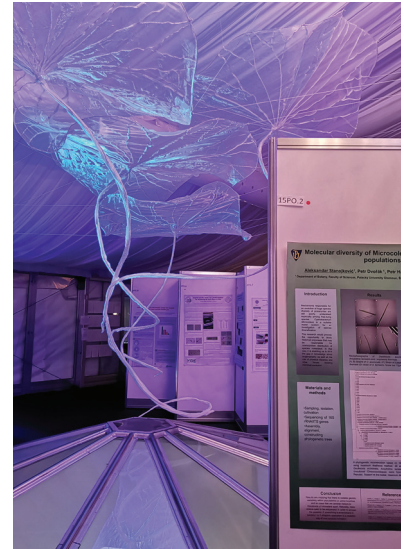
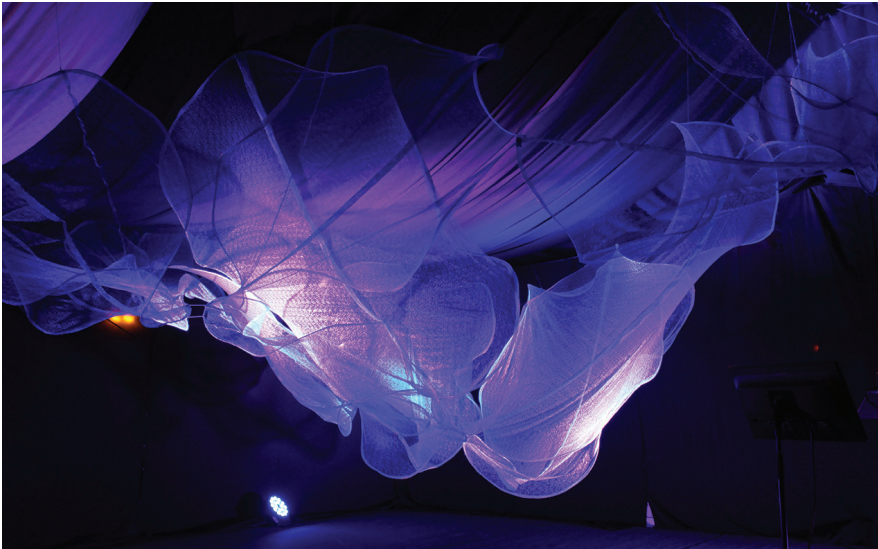


Fig. 5. Ida Blažičko displayed her art at the congress venue. Photo Ida Blažičko.

Beside these three galleries, EPC7 had the honour to host artist Ida Blažičko who displayed her art at the congress venue in the plenary room (<http://www.idablazicko.com>) (Figure 5). These works of art were a much-appreciated upgrade of the EPC7 as an excellent tool of communication

among scientists and made the science more easily accessible to the public.

Assoc. Prof. Zrinka Ljubešić  
University of Zagreb  
Faculty of Science  
Department of Biology