

Environ 2018

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Two hundred and eighty five delegates registered for the hugely successful three day 28th Irish Environmental Researchers Colloquium, Environ 2018 in Cork Institute of Technology which was organised by Dr. Joe Harrington and Dr. Niamh Power (Conference Joint Convenors), Sinead Macken (Environmental Sciences Association of Ireland – ESAI Liaison) and ESAI council members. The theme of the conference was “Arriving at a Sustainable Future”.



Public Engagement Event: Mr. Ken Leahy, Ms. Claire Nash, Dr. Joe Harrington, Mr. Ezra MacManamon, Dr. Mary O' Connor, Mr. Jonathan Healy, Professor Frances Lucey

88 oral papers and 75 posters were presented at the conference which was divided into seventeen themes:- Water Quality & Resources, Waste Management, Energy, Climate Change, Invasive Change, Invasive Species, Environmental Policy & Communication, Human Health, Ecotoxicology, Environmental Management, Air Quality & Urban Development, Marine & Coastal, The Human Built Environment, Sustainable Infrastructure, Sustainable Land Use & Agriculture, Biodiversity & Ecosystems, Nanotechnology & the Environment and Smart Technology for the Environment.

Delegates from The Netherlands, France, Germany, Belgium, the UK, Northern Ireland and Ireland attended the conference.

Highlights of the conference included a public engagement debate entitled “Flooding in the Cork Region – Impacts and Solutions” which was attended by over 100 people. This public engagement event focused on a matter of local, national and indeed international importance, the debate was lively and informative with very positive feedback on the event. Speakers included from the Office of Public Works (OPW), Arup Consulting Engineers and the local

business community. The invited speakers were given eight minutes to outline their position. This was followed by a very vibrant and informative question and answer session that was skilfully chaired by Mr. Jonathan Healy (Newstalk). The different sides of the argument were fully aired and the debate went on past 10pm due to the number of questions from the audience.



Public Engagement Event

The debate was previewed on the local *Evening Echo* newspaper and announced on local radio stations.



Public Engagement Event

The public engagement debate was preceded by a cheese and wine reception in the Berkeley Building on the CIT campus.

The conference began on the afternoon of Monday 26th March with three education and training workshops on offer to delegates: 'Field Trip to Haulbowline Island Remediation Project' (Mr Kieran Ruane, CIT and Dr. Cormac O'Suilleabhain, Cork County Council), 'Bringing Research to the next level – Commercialisation, Code of Conduct, IP & Technology Transfer' (Mr. Ronan Coleman, CIT and Mr. Kevin Fitzgibbon, CIT WSSIC) and 'Statistical analysis for research – using SPSS statistical software' (Dr. Catherine Palmer).

At 9.15am Tuesday 28th March, the conference was officially opened with a ceremony held in the CIT Tourism and Catering Building. The speakers included: Michael Loftus, CIT Head of Faculty of Engineering and Science, Dr. Joe Harrington, Conference Co-Convenor and Professor Frances Lucey, ESAI Chairperson. This opening event was followed by a plenary session with keynote addresses from Dr. Jonathan



Conference Opening & Plenary: Mr. Michael Loftus, Mr. Eamon Ryan, Dr. Jonathan Derham, Professor Frances Lucey, Dr. Joe Harrington

Derham, EPA Director and Mr. Eamon Ryan, Green Party. Both speakers gave thought provoking addresses on science and its communication and dissemination.

Over the course of the next two day 88 oral papers were presented in four parallel sessions. 75 academic posters were exhibited in Room T136 of the Tourism and Catering Building. This arrangement worked particularly well as it allowed delegates to mingle with exhibitors/sponsors and to view the posters on display.



Some of the CIT Staff involved in Environ

The college hosted the Environmental Science Association of Ireland AGM on Tuesday evening which was very well attended and included an oral presentation by Philip Shine the Postgraduate Research of the Year Award Winner for 2017.

Proceedings then moved to the Clayton Hotel Silver Springs for the Environ 2018 conference dinner. The evening began with a drinks reception in the Tivoli Suite with entertainment from a quartet of CIT's very talented School of Music students. A buffet dinner was then served in the Tivoli Suite with music afterwards from Ted Dunne Entertainment, a good night was had by all!

Wednesday began with registration opening at 9.15am. A keynote address was given by Josien Ruijter of NV HVC, The Netherlands at a Plenary Session at 9.30am on the *Dutch Experience of Wastewater Sludge Incineration and Phosphorous Recycling*. This informative keynote address was very well attended. Ms. Ruijter is a member of the EU Interreg Phos4You Project Team. 9 papers and posters were presented by the Phos4You Partners at the Environ 2018 Conference, the attendance and presentation by the Phos4You partners (CIT is a partner on this EU-funded project) was a feature and a highlight of the Conference. The conference then continued with oral



Some of the CIT Staff involved in Environ

presentations taking place throughout the morning alongside the poster presentations.



Environ Delegates at a Poster Session

This was followed by lunch and then the important business of the day, the Environ 2018 prize giving.



Environ Delegates at the Closing Event

A huge thank you to everyone, both staff and students, who made the conference such a success.