**Climate change, fisheries management, and modelling changes in benthic fish community structure on the Kerguelen Plateau**

Joel Williams1\*, Scott Foster2, Skip Woolley3, Philippe Ziegler4, Cara Masere4, Kaitlin Naughton5, Otso Ovaskainen6,7, Craig Johnson1, Nicole Hill1

**Affiliations**

1 Institute for Marine and Antarctic Science, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

2 Data61, CSIRO, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

3 Environment, CSIRO, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

4 Australian Antarctic Division, Kingston, Tasmania, Australia

5 British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, United Kingdom

6 Department of Biological and Environmental Science, University of Jyväskylä, P.O. Box 35 (Survontie 9C), FI-40014 Jyväskylä, Finland

7 Organismal and Evolutionary Biology Research Programme, Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Helsinki, P.O. Box 65, Helsinki 00014, Finland

**\*Corresponding author:** joel.williams@utas.edu.au

**Abstract (max 1500 characters, spaces included)**

The Kerguelen Plateau is a biodiversity hotspot with many endemic fish species, it also has economic importance in supporting valuable fisheries. Furthermore, it is a climate change hotspot with changes in water temperatures and ocean currents. Most existing information on fish species and their distribution in this region is derived from annual random trawl surveys, fishery observations, and indirectly from research on fish predators. In this study we use trawl survey data and joint species distribution models to understand how the fish assemblages have changed through time and space. Using a joint species distribution modelling approach, we demonstrate that several species, including mackerel icefish, have realised large changes in their distribution and abundance through time. These changes are likely to be related to environmental factors such as sea surface temperature anomalies and southern annular mode. Our results indicate that the prevalence and abundance of many species, and overall species richness, have increased over the period 2003 to 2016. It is unclear if these changes reflect shifts in the fishery, management, or due to climate change. We found evidence of several species’ distributions responding to temperature variability, and these species are potentially exposed to the ongoing impacts of climate change. This new information can be used by managers and policy makers to ensure sustainable fisheries and the protection of biodiversity into the future.

**Keywords**: demersal fish, climate change, community ecology, fisheries management, joint species distribution

**Theme**

* Climate changes and their impacts on marine ecosystems

**Type of presentation**

* Oral
* Poster