IMCONet Workshop on "Food Web Modeling"

7th September – 9th September 2015 at National University General Sarmiento (Argentina)
Lead by Prof. Fernando Momo

From 7 to 9th of September 2015 an **IMCONet Workshop on "Food Web Modeling"** was held at the National University of General Sarmiento (UNGS) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Workshop was coordinated by Professor Fernando Momo (UNGS; Leader WP6) and involved scientists of WP4 (Benthic Ecology) and WP6 (Ecological Modeling).

Participants were from UNGS, the Argentine Antarctic Institute (IAA), the partners from Ghent University (Belgium) and from the universities of Cordoba and Lujan in Argentina.

Tasks completed:

The participants discussed and refined the trophic relationships between the species composing the Potter Cove food web from zooplankton to the fishes.

The main trophic guilds and the relative resilience of different key species to disturbances were determined based on all the food web data and in-depth analyses that were gathered by all partners. The taxon-specific in-depth knowledge of the different researchers was pivotal for this joint action, more specifically to clarify the strength and specificity of the trophic interactions in the Potter Cove food web. Organismal groups were classified with respect to their ecological importance in the cove.

New data sets were prepared to be incorporated in the food web model.

The conceptual research questions that can be answered by means of this food web were discussed in the group. In this context, there was special emphasis on the number of connections and their length and strength, top-down and bottom-up control of the food web, redundancy of species, and the role of diversity for the level of specialization in terms of feeding ecology (quantified as number of trophic interactions).

Results:

The workshop resulted in a first complete reference food web that can be further refined and in defining the objectives and structure of joint manuscripts and an optimal publication strategy.