

To William Cheung, on the completion of his Postdoc with the Sea Around Us Project (2007-2008)

by Daniel Pauly

Wai Lung 'William' Cheung, on December 31, 2008, completed his Postdoc in the best manner possible: by moving on to become a 'Lecturer' (the British way of pronouncing 'Assistant Professor'), at the University of East Anglia.

This was not surprising. In his work as a postdoc, William had managed to exceed the already huge expectation we had, based on his doctoral work. As part of our team, he was tasked with developing a generic 'climate envelope' model to simulate (predict) the shift towards higher latitude that marine fishes and invertebrate (will) experience as a result of global warming. The model was developed, written and documented (Cheung *et al.* 2007), then applied to the over 1000 species of marine fishes and invertebrates for which the Sea Around Us Project has distributions (and FAO catch statistics).

This led to the supporting study of Cheung *et al.* (2008), which established, for the first time, a robust relationship between the distribution area of fish and the potential production, other things being equal (their trophic level, primary production in their habitats, etc), and to the first paper ever to present maps of expected impact of different global warming scenarios on the biodiversity of the world oceans



Former post doc William Cheung.
Photo by Sherman Lai.

(Cheung *et al.*, *in press*). And a fourth paper, building on the first three, predicting changes in global and country-specific catch potential is under review, all this being done while at the same time completing the publication of papers from his doctoral thesis, and patiently and admirably helping other people with their research.

This work saw us closely collaborating, and I can't express how much I appreciate the thoughtful exchanges this generated. Fortunately, William has promised to continue our collaboration, particularly on global warming impact. The next paper is planned to include the effect of declining dissolved oxygen, which we expect to be very strong, but have so far ignored. Watch this space,

therefore, for more news about William and his path-breaking work.

In the meantime, we shall wish him good luck in his new home. And in order to avoid him embarrassment with his new colleagues, I won't conclude by quoting the words he used when describing the local food (I did warn him).

References:

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- Cheung, W., Lam, V. and Pauly, D. (Eds). 2008. Modelling Present and Climate-shifted Distribution of Marine Fishes and Invertebrates. Fisheries Centre Research Report 16(3), 72 p.
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