



## Second ISME Latin American Congress - ISME-LAT 2021 - Report

Researchers in Colombia, together with the network of Latin American ISME Ambassadors and local technical expert support, organized the second regional ISME Congress (ISME-LAT 2021) on July 27-30, 2021. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the event was done online using the events platform at Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia. The event had seven plenary speakers, twelve parallel sessions and a final panel discussion on the social impact of science for the region (Table 1). There were also two poster sessions and one session for oral presentation of selected posters. In addition, three workshops were organized before and after the event (Table 1). The congress aimed to showcase the work of researchers in Latin American working on microbial ecology to strengthen ties and collaborations and consolidate a scientific community capable of addressing regional problems with global projection.

**Table 1. Program overview**

ISME - LAT 2021 Program Overview			
July 22-23	Workshop: Qiime 2		
July 26	Workshop: Public engagement and dissemination of science		
Day 1 July 27	Plenary lecture: Redirecting the scientific system to combat the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Gonzalo Moratorio		
	Room A: Microbiomes associated with animal hosts	Room B: Environmental effects on microbial communities	Room C: Phages and viruses
	Plenary lecture: Linking the gut microbiome and metabolome to understand dietary response. Rob Knight		
	Poster session 1		
Day 2 July 28	Plenary lecture: Codiversification of gut microbiota with humans. Ruth Ley		
	Room D: Microbial biotechnology	Room E: Methods applied in microbial ecology and computational tools	Room F: Extremophiles
	Plenary lecture: The human microbiome in a disruptive era. María Domínguez.-Bello		
	Poster session 2		
Day 3 July 29	Plenary lecture: Structuring the soil microbiome by the cultivation of cover crops. Fernando Dini Andreote		
	Room G: Synthetic microbial ecology	Room H: Microbial ecology of mixed communities	Room I: Plant-associated microbiomes
	Best poster session		
Day 4 July 30	Plenary lecture: The Art of Harnessing Dark Energy: Symbiosis between Chemosynthetic Bacteria and Marine Invertebrates. Nicole Dubilier		
	Room J: Soil microbial ecology	Room K: Microbial ecology of aquatic environments	Room L: Human microbiome and health
	Round table discussion: Science and Society in Latin America		
	Closure: Microbial ecology in a changing world: public policy, interdisciplinarity and outreach. Cristina Dorador		
Aug 2	Workshop: Homology-based microbiome analysis using DIAMOND+MEGAN		

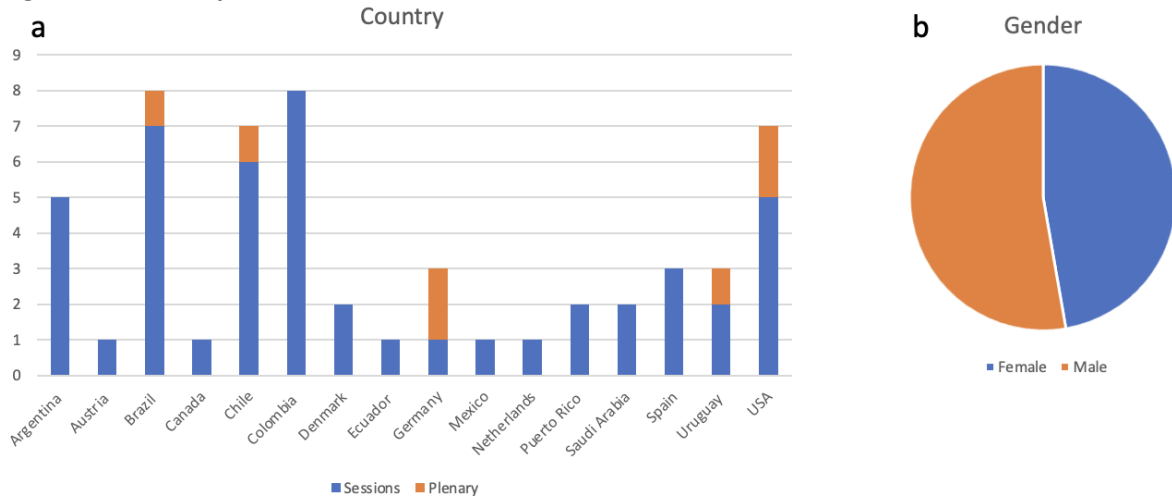
- Plenary session speakers.** Among the keynote speakers, there were two ISME representatives: Dr. Nicole Dubilier, president of ISME, and Dr. Cristina Dorador, currently an ISME board member.
  - Gonzalo Moratorio – Uruguay
  - Rob Knight – United States
  - Ruth Ley – Germany
  - María Domínguez – United States
  - Fernando Andreote – Brazil
  - Nicole Dubilier – Germany – ISME President
  - Cristina Dorador – Chile – ISME board member
- Parallel sessions.** Each session consisted of four presentations with speakers from the following countries: Argentina (5), Austria (1), Brazil (7), Canada (1), Chile (6), Colombia (8), Denmark (2), Ecuador (1), Germany (1), Mexico (1), Netherlands (1), Puerto Rico (2), Saudi Arabia (2), Spain (3),



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Uruguay (2), USA (5). Figure 1 shows the total number of speakers, including plenary speakers, based on country (a) and gender (b).

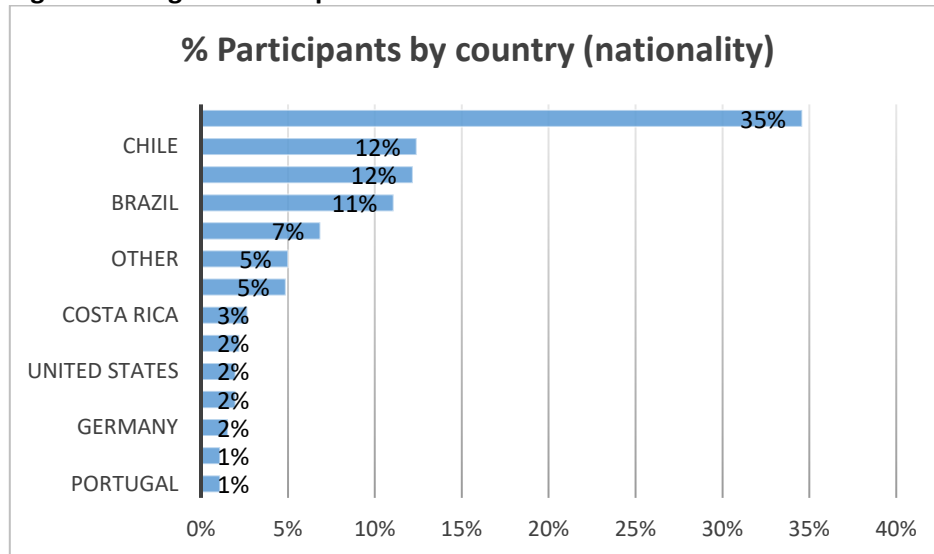
**Figure 1. Invited speakers**



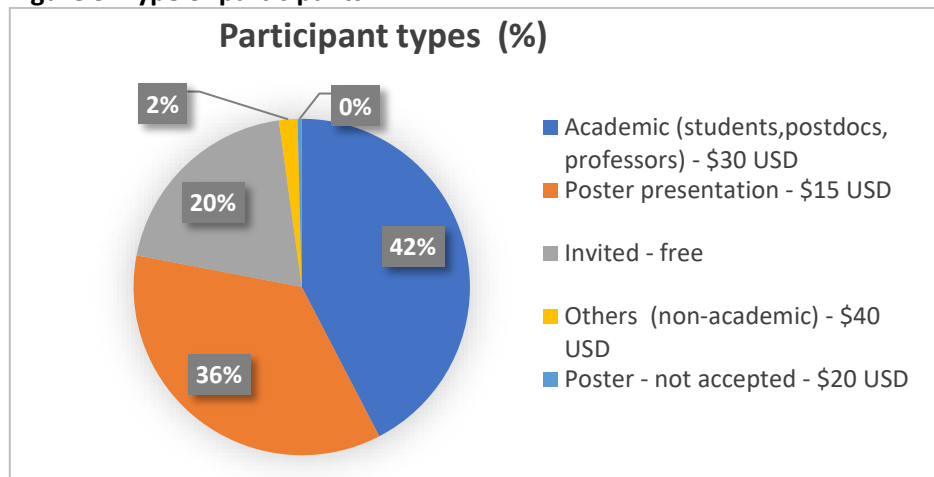
3. The **Panel Discussion** on “*Science and Society in Latin America*” was carried out with scientist actively involved in promoting science and science communication:
  - Roberto Kolter – Harvard Medical School, USA
  - Susan Bueno – Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
  - Arturo Casadevall – Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, USA
4. **Workshops** were organized and carried out with help from students and experts in each topic:
  - **Qiime2 Workshop**, July 22 and 23, 49 participants. Instructors: Team from BCEM, Universidad de los Andes with collaboration from Dr. Greg Caporaso and Qiime staff, Northern Arizona University
  - **Public engagement and Science Communication**, July 26, 2021 – 52 participants (held in Spanish); instructor: Dr. Maria Camila Gómez, UK.
  - **Homology-Based Microbiome Analysis Using DIAMOND+MEGAN**, Aug 2, 2021 – 27 participants; instructor: Dr. Daniel Huson, Tübingen University, and his research group.
5. More than 500 **Participants** registered from 26 countries (Figure 2). Registration costs varied depending on the whether they were from industry (40 USD), academia (30 USD), presented posters (15 USD if selected; otherwise, 20 USD), invited speakers and guests (free) (Figure 3). 232 posters were submitted and presented in two poster sessions. Of these posters, 9 were selected for short oral presentations during the third day of the congress.



**Figure 2. Congress Participants**



**Figure 3. Type of participants**



The percentage is shown for the various types of participants, along with the registration cost.

6. **Organization.** The organization involved not only the local scientific committee and help from regional ISME Ambassadors, but also constant support and technical help from the event organizers, web page and platform integration, and administrative assistance at Universidad de los Andes.
  - Local scientific committee: María Mercedes Zambrano, ISME Ambassador to Colombia, Corporación Corpogen; Alejandro Acosta, Young ISME Ambassador to Colombia, Universidad de la Sabana; Alejandro Caro, Universidad Nacional de Colombia; Alejandro Reyes, Martha Lucía Cepeda, Diego Jiménez, Carlos Moreno, and Maryam Chaib de Mares, Universidad de los Andes; Vanessa Otero, Universidad Nacional de Colombia and General Coordinator of the event.



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- Technical and logistics of the hosting institution (U de los Andes) was under the expert guidance of Vanina Jacob and her group; Students helped with courses and gave support during the event; Administrative support was provided by U de los Andes.

### 7. **Costs.** The Budget included the following:

**Table 2. Event costs.**

Item	Cost	Source
Virtual event platform	€ 2,000	U de los Andes
Translation - plenary sessions	€ 1,000	Registration
Coordinator	€ 2,500	ISME
Additional costs	€ 1,500	Registration
<b>Total:</b>	<b>€ 7,000</b>	

The funds provided by ISME were used to pay the event general coordinator, Vanessa Otero, who was instrumental for the success of the various activities. She was paid: 358 Euro x 7 months.

8. **ISME-LAT 2023.** Local ambassadors will continue to work closely to ensure the continuation of this regional event. The next ISME-LAT is therefore programmed to be held in Argentina in 2023.